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Volume II

Louis Goldblatt

WORKING CLASS LEADER IN THE ILWU, 1935-1977

in two volumes

With an Introduction by
Clark Kerr

An Interview Conducted by
Estolv Ethan Ward
in 1978, 1979

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VOLUME II

XV PERILS OF PARALLELISM

(Interview 22: 15 August, 1978)

More About Expulsion From The CIO

Ward: Lou, we were going to talk about the circumstances surrounding the expulsion of the ILWU from the CIO.

LG: Yes - I think we've covered very thoroughly the 1949 ILWU convention, although I believe the three guys who came out did not include R. J. Thomas. That was at a later time or different circumstances. The ones who were here were Adolph Germer, Jim Leonard - was it Tim Flynn?

Ward: Yes, Flynn -

LG: Right - he was on the CIO staff in Los Angeles. The ones who were around the convention and who sent the telegram saying we better line up or else. The principal issue on which there was sharp disagreement, the most fundamental as far as the ILWU was concerned, was autonomy.

Just to make clear what we meant by that: it didn't necessarily mean, for example, that if the CIO Executive Council adopted a position, we would arbitrarily have the right to just go out and denigrate it and turn it down. On that score, we said okay, we'll feel obligated to present the recommendation, but at that point the membership still had the right to agree or disagree. It was not a business of being a group of completely undisciplined characters who

LG: were out to do as they pleased. Autonomy was the basic issue. A second issue that loomed big at the convention was the World Federation of Trade Unions; by 1949, the CIO was pulling out of it, although the CIO was one of the founding members of the WFTU. The Cold War had set in and changes that were reflected in the CIO were taking place in the political scene.

As I recall, Bob Robertson went to the CIO convention in 1948. In '48, of course, we were up to our ears in the longshore strike and it could very well be that he was the only one we sent, just to be present and pick up whatever support we could for the strike. Whether he went to the '49 convention, I'm not sure myself.

There were a whole series of unions under the gun - United Electrical Workers, the Radio Operators, American Communications Association, the Fur and Leather Workers; another was Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, a total of around ten. Some of them small, some of them big. Whether the Packinghouse Workers were under the gun, I'm not sure; they probably were because I think it was before they merged with the Butcher Workmen. Anyway, they had these series of trials, and now I'll go back to our trial, which took place in 1950.

We felt that the trial itself of course didn't amount to much; it was pretty well pro forma. Arthur Goldberg was counsel for the CIO at the time and he presented the CIO's case, all of it predicated around "parellelism," or that the ILWU was taking the same position as the Communist party. There was no discussion on the merits, whether it was a good position or a bad position. The only concern of the CIO was that this was their way of proving that we were following a Communist party line. This of course was not true. The union would take issues up on their own merits, like the Marshall Plan.

Ward: What was the union's position on the Marshall Plan?

LG: Our general position was that we were not opposed to the Marshall Plan as such, the idea of helping some of the staggering economies in Europe. We didn't think the Marshall Plan was going to provide any genuine amelioration for what to us appeared to be the growing signs of another depression. The immediate post-war boom was somewhat over and, you might recall, by 1949 unemployment was growing very rapidly. The economy took quite a tailspin until it was shored up by the Korean War.

Our principal objection was the use of the Marshall Plan to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries, including the promotion in almost all cases of hard, rightwing lines invariably in violent opposition to any of the leftwing unions like the CGIL in Italy, or the CGT in France.

Of course the Administration was huckle-de-buck for the Marshall Plan, and that was the position of the CIO as well. As a matter of fact, by 1949 there was a good deal of economic information coming along to confirm the ILWU position. But these things sort of got lost in the shuffle. That was not the concern of the people who were pressing for our ouster.

This whole move was for the CIO to wear its sack cloth and ashes, do penance, and finally get accepted into the official circles. I think that cleaning up the CIO was just another facet of the Cold War and its application inside the trade union movement. Bear in mind, all this went hand in hand with Taft-Hartley, with non-Communist affidavits, with the step-up in redbaiting that was going on. All these things were a single package.

Ward: What was the evidence?

LG: The same parellelism, nothing else.

Ward: Nobody got up and said something?

LG: Yes. But there was no effort to prove, for example, that somebody was a member of the Communist party, that so many members of our Executive Board were in the Communist party. None of this. They satisfied themselves entirely with this business of putting a case together which put the Peoples' World on one side, The Dispatcher on the other and said they took the same position on this or that and the other thing.

Ward: So, they did that?

LG: Yes. No attempt to weigh them, either. In other words, there was no effort in the presentation of the material to say, all right, they took this position which was identical with that of the Communist party. They ignored the following 25 issues of the two papers that might have given them doubts.

These, of course, are things that I'm thoroughly familiar with because I recall some pretty sharp differences with some of the party people on some of their positions. One, where they developed this theory of super-seniority. I, for one, felt that this was a terribly mistaken policy. I think eventually the whole thing was dropped; it was just one of those flyers. Somebody sits down and works these things out on the typewriter, even before they think them through.

There were other things I felt didn't make too much sense; some of their, not dallying around with the '49 strike - they pretty well left it alone - but party people had been down there and of course they had a party organization in Hawaii. For some reason or other, they in effect tried to preempt the union thinking on a lot of these things.

I guess that happens to a lot of organizations, the party people posing the problem that we might be pretty good trade unionists but after all we didn't know the political scene the way they did; sort of an odd down-grading. I got

LG: reports on some of their meetings. I know that Jack and I talked it over and I said, "Oh, forget the whole thing; no use getting into that kind of a discussion with them. It's a waste of time."

So, it isn't as though the CIO made any attempt to find these things out - it was just this other type of presentation. I think that O. A. Knight - Jack Knight - was a member of that committee.

Ward: Was there any attempt on the part of the ILWU to point out the things you just mentioned? The differences in strategy and tactics?

LG: I doubt it; we weren't going to go in there to try to prove that we were not guilty by redbaiting others. This is the most accepted technique of all - and I think the most dangerous - because you start on that line and the end point is exactly what the opposition wants to get done.

You start out by saying, "Look, I am not a Red." Somebody then says, "Okay, prove it." "Well, I disagreed with the Communist party on this, that or the other and agreed on some of the things I might have thought they were right on. I might have second thoughts about them - I'm still of an independent mind." "Well, that doesn't mean a thing; what are you doing to actively fight them?"

Once you start proving it that way, then they're standing behind you and saying, "How come you've stopped fighting?" You out of wind or something? Why don't you take this issue up, that issue up?" Pretty soon they're barraging you with every redbaiting program you can imagine. It's a route that once you start, there is no turning back.

I'm not saying you don't challenge these things under certain circumstances: like we spent some time in that fact-finding hearing in Hawaii. I recall before the fact-finding hearing even started, there was the offer to make it binding arbitration which was immediately rejected by the employers.

LG: I deliberately made another proposal, that they start the whole fact-finding off by looking into the question of whether or not this was a Communist strike. Apparently there was a bit of a halt in the proceedings; their panel huddled or caucused or something, then announced, "Communism is not an issue." That had nothing to do with what the papers were saying - no, of course not - so, it is not as though you don't tackle some of these things, but you tackle them in a different way. So, to try to present this stuff to the CIO - that would have made no sense at all.

Ward: Was there anybody at the CIO hearing before this committee, chaired by O. A. Knight, for the ILWU?

LG: Yes, Harry was there.

Ward: Oh, Harry was there?

LG: I think Bill Glazier might have been there. I know we sent Tony Rania back there. Tony Rania was head of this combined Hawaii local, Local 142, and he made a very dramatic presentation. He came from the Waialua plantation. That's on Oahu and one of the last that we organized. That was the one managed by this guy, Midkiff.

Ward: The guy who had you out to dinner?

LG: Yep, the guy who was going to pay us the dues if we'd leave him alone; smart, paternalistic attitude; paid off a little bit better where the whole strike leadership wound up as <u>lunas</u> after the strike.

Well, anyway Tony Rania was there and presented a damn dramatic case. He had worked at Waialua, as well as other sugar plantations; he knew a lot about it and had been there most of his life. When he got all through, there was no reply to the things he testified about: the difference that the ILWU made in plantation life; what happened in the political scene; what happened sociologically as well as economically. What happened was a complete revolution.

LG: No, the only reply of the people in the CIO pressing for expulsion was the standard one they used in those days. "This might be true, but the real question is 'Why did you do these things? What was the real motive?'"

##

Ward: Okay, did Harry or anyone else make any response besides Tony?

LG: Yes. I think Harry presented a case, pretty much along the lines of the position the ILWU convention had taken, the feelings of the union about autonomy and the guarantees of autonomy that were the initial understandings and agreements on affiliation.

Ward: Was any argument made before this committee to the effect that they had supported the ILWU and the officials of the ILWU - the ILWU hadn't changed. Why this change on the part of the CIO?

LG: Well, no, that's irrelevant, as far as the people present were concerned.

Ward: Well, did anybody say so?

LG: I suppose Harry did, yeah. That was one of the things we hammered away at, at the convention before a vote was taken on autonomy. The vote on autonomy was overwhelming.

Ward: So you were kicked out?

LG. Yeah. All the unions under the gun agreed generally on the procedure to be used. There was a strong feeling on the part of the UE that the so-called trials were just kangaroo courts, nothing but show pieces designed to promote the CIO's efforts to wipe out these unions. In the case of the UE they walked out. So, there wasn't complete agreement but no hard words among us; one outfit wanted to go about it one way and the other outfit wanted to go at it another way.

LG: We decided it was better to stay on and fight. Incidentally, not too different a position than what we took at the time we affiliated with the CIO and were still part of the AFofL. There again, we made the decision that we were not just going to walk away, we would stay and fight, even though it might eventually lead to expulsion; the fight was worthwhile and we'd pick up some allies. And I think we did.

I think that the fight against the expulsion, brought on the exposure that we're not the ones who changed, it was the CIO, which was expelling its own conscience when we were expelled. I think that was a major factor in the ranks being extremely solid during the whole beef; it became extremely important when we had to go through the whole period of attempted raids by the CIO and the Teamsters. Anyway, the net result was that we were heaved out of the CIO.

The Raids

Ward: And then came the raids?

LG: Right, within Local 6 particularly and to some degree in other Warehouse locals. They started so-called Blue Card groups, where people would signify their loyalty to the CIO by signing blue cards; they attempted to form what amounted to a CIO faction.

They had a very limited amount of success, frankly because a pretty thorough job had been done, including not just the information in The Dispatcher; we covered all these things in great detail. We didn't see any purpose in keeping this information from anyone and we involved the rank and file in the hearing back east. I don't think Tony Rania was the only guy who went back there - I think there were several Board members.

The Blue Card group - and in some places they had the support of the ACTU - had rather limited success. The place where the raids

LG: were significant and more difficult was in Warehouse. Bear in mind, the 1949 warehouse strike wound up towards the fall of the year. The local finally muscled its way through the strike. It was costly and too long; it was one of those situations where the employers, at the time of the contract expiration where wages were open, refused to make any kind of an offer at all.

Whether this was just some of the bigger employers in the Distributors Association feeling pretty cocky with the passage of Taft-Hartley; whether some of them felt that because the Hawaii strike was already under way - we would have an awful lot of trouble fighting a two-front war. The Bridges indictment had come down. It could be that they felt that all these things combined presented a fairly good picture.

Ward: From their point of view?

LG: From their point of view; it's true also that about that time the economy was staggering. The post-war bloom had come off the rose and there were signs of increasing unemployment. Whatever all the reasons were, they amounted to the employers just setting on their heels. In the 1949 warehouse strike, the issue of arbitration came to the forefront almost as quickly as in Hawaii.

I think that the fight in 1948 on the Pacific Coast, fighting in Hawaii in '49 and taking on the battle in warehouse were fundamentally sound. A lot of things are learned very quickly in strikes; issues come to the forefront in a hurry, meetings are very big. Whoever made the crack that that's when you get a college education in a couple of months was not too far off.

Everything is discussed; not just the stock issues but the relationship of the strike with rest of the labor movement, between the strike and the community, what was going on within the CIO; there was no backing away on the economic scene. I think that had we backed away, another issue would have come to the forefront.

LG: It became an issue in Mine-Mill, namely, is leftwing leadership too damn expensive to have around? Not just the running battle that ensues, the constant harassment. Does it become expensive in the sense that this fight against political persecution begins to preempt the economic struggle where the guy's bread and butter and paycheck are on the line?

I'm not saying it's ever posed that way, but you begin to read the rumbles and you know when some of the overtones are around. You might be a good guy, we don't mind your political opinions, that's your business; we think a leftwing union is the only kind of union that makes some sense, but - and you get that "but" - then you better keep a close eye on it.

So, I think the economic policy followed by the union to fight on on these issues was a sound one, including attending the WFTU meeting. These are things we believed in, these are the things we fought for; they had been adopted by the convention. There was no lack of debate: wide open debate, the CIO was invited to be there.

This is the way you follow through; okay, we believe these things, the convention adopted them and we'll do them. Those things stood us in good stead, although we went through a very rough period with the Blue Card.

The only damage that was really done was the Teamster raid. In 1938 and the struggle around the master contract a Teamster local led by Ted White came out of the woodwork.

Ward: Eight-sixty?

LG: Eight-sixty, right. They announced a master agreement which was exactly what the employers were demanding; there were full-page ads in the paper by the Teamsters. Beck had never completely recovered from '37, and he was still licking his wounds. One of the guys who had been a business agent for Local 6, and he always remained friendly, was Joe Dillon. Joe Dillon is gone now - he's dead.

LG: Joe went over the hill one day, but he did so in a pretty forthright way; talked to Harry and myself and said, "Look, you guys just aren't paying me enough. You guys don't think that way. I'm living down the Peninsula and my wife likes it there; my kids are all going to Catholic schools. I can't get by on that kind of dough. I've been offered a job with the Teamsters; they're going to give me my own local down there and I'm taking it. I guarantee you I won't be party to any attempt to raid or screw around with the ILWU." He was cordial enough.

Well, after the expulsion from the CIO, a group of our officials - from what information came along later - had been in touch with Joe Dillon and also with Beck and I think through Beck with Einar Mohn. Years later, Einar Mohn conceded that was one of his major mistakes.

As a matter of fact, years later when we started cooperating with the Teamsters in the warehouse field, on several occasions they tried to hand us back some of these workers who had gone over the hill in San Francisco and become part of Teamster Local 12, which was sort of dying on the vine.

Our position at the time was that we were not Indian givers and they had them and it was their headache. They were obviously trying to unload a problem because they picked up a couple of guys who were quite impossible.

The guys who went over the hill were primarily led by a couple of business agents, one of whom was also functioning International Rep for a while, Domenic Gallo; then with him was a guy named George Pedrin. Tony Koslowski - he was killed later or died; rather a nice guy, but when he was on the booze, quite impossible. I always liked him. They picked up a few other guys, and before long here was a full blown Teamster raid going on, directed first against some of our grocery houses.

Local 6 had about 10,000 members. By the time the raid was finished, they had picked up around 250 all together, but where they did

LG: major damage was in Petaluma; there we had a foothold in things like the feed mills and grain mills; whether any of them are functioning at this day, I don't know. We also had gone through a very bitter post Taft-Hartley strike up there against Sunset Line and Twine.

That's where Taft-Hartley was interpreted to provide that after a certain length of time, strikebreakers had the right to vote. Later on they modified it to say strikebreakers and the strikers both could vote. They began to use the Taft-Hartley Law for decertification and it first blossomed in Sunset Line and Twine.

We were not in compliance with Taft-Hartley - there was damn little we could do about it - all we could do was to fall back on the economic strength of our people, which worked or didn't work, depending on the situation. They made things like fishing lines and other kinds of lines; it wasn't a big place, 40 or 50 people, maybe. We had a loyal bunch of people there, but the strike was broken.

Many years later I found out that the Teamsters spent well over a half a million dollars on the raid. Now when you start pricing out that thing - half a million dollars for 250 people - that runs you somewhere in the neighborhood of $2,000 per man, that's about right: $2,000 times 250 makes a half a million. So, it was a very expensive thing for the Teamsters; what they finally wound up with was no great blessing for them, either.

Incidentally, perhaps the most effective thing that these guys did, and it didn't build their union a goddam bit, did enormous damage to the labor movement. The only effective piece of propaganda they used during that whole Teamster raid was that one of the things they stood for was no compulsory attendance at membership meetings. This was one of the principles of the ILWU.

Ward: Well, that's one of the ways you can run a top-controlled union.

LG: Sure, you have a couple of trustees, you pay for them coming to the meeting and then a couple of friends and you buy a few beers afterwards . . . .

Ward: And that's the meeting?

LG: That's the meeting. To us, of course, attendance at a meeting was highly important. It was a very educational thing and we didn't have any heavy penalty. It was a one buck fine, if you didn't attend a membership meeting, but nobody wanted that fine in his book, you see; that was important. And the Teamsters campaigned that local compulsory attendance was illegal under Taft-Hartley. And they were right, because under Taft-Hartley the only thing a person had to do to remain a member in good standing, even though you had a union shop contract, was to tender his dues, period.

That's one of the things that went by the board. We used to have big meetings. Local 6 had to use the Civic Auditorium - it was the only auditorium around that was adequate because our membership meetings would run about . . .

Ward: About 10,000 then?

LG: Slightly less, 10,000 would fill the Civic Auditorium; for a while we met only in San Francisco, after a while we had meetings on both sides of the Bay because we had a very big membership in Oakland. There we used the Oakland Civic Auditorium. Even after membership attendance wasn't compulsory, we'd meet there for strike meetings or contract ratification. But in San Francisco we used the Civic Auditorium; the whole downstairs would be completely filled.

That's where some of the big breaks took place on this group going over the hill, led by Gallo. He was challenged by George Valter in the membership meeting and as soon as the meeting was over, he jumped off the platform - Gallo is a good fighter - and clipped Valter on the jaw and cut it open. George had that scar until he died.

LG: Anyway, that was the most effective thing Taft-Hartley and the Teamsters did. It helped eviscerate the democratic function of the union; one of the great contributions of Taft-Hartley and Landrum-Griffin (another piece of anti-union legislation). So, that was a costly and difficult period. Bear in mind that the same period we're talking about was the latter part of 1949 and most of 1950. Anyway, we survived.

Ward: Was that the time when you lost in Chicago and New Orleans?

LG: Beginning about that time the thing that became evident was that we would have to pull in our lines and protect our base. It was more and more difficult to hang on to places like in Cleveland, or Chicago, or Minneapolis, or New Orleans.

Gradually, in almost all cases, there was a constructive turn-over. We'd meet with friendly unions and recommend to our locals that because we couldn't service them and in view of the whole situation, they might be better off in some friendly union. That was worked out.

Ward: Who'd be the friendly unions?

LG: Oh, I think in the case of the Cleveland workers, I'm quite sure it was the Packinghouse Workers. These were unions where we knew some of the people.

Ward: How about New Orleans?

LG: I don't recall where we turned them over. We lost the best guy we had down there. Andy Nelson died very young - he was a good, effective black guy.

Ward: What happened to him?

LG: Got sick all of a sudden and died. So, Warehouse continued to be stable, although later on, we were definitely in a holding action partially because of all the raids.

LG: An interesting thing happened in Warehouse where the employers themselves realized that if the bargaining unit was taken apart then they would really be back to the situation which was fought out in 1938 around the hot boxcar - the whipsaw. So they were compelled to go before the (National Labor Relations) Board and talk about the traditional bargaining unit, and there was a holding action.

I remember negotiating a contract - it must have been the period right after Pat died - where we had to make a deal for something like two and one-half cents an hour, which even in those days was considered pretty poor. And the membership knew why we did it; that we had to regroup our forces; we had taken a certain amount of buffeting.

Good guys from the local later on said that it was "the best damn agreement that you ever signed", in some ways because it was the only thing to do instead of going into another fruitless fight. The '49 strike was too expensive in terms of the amount of time spent on the bricks, and not enough fundamental issues were involved.

Oh, one other point. During this Teamster raid there were some really violent outbreaks when the Teamsters tried to move into places like the United Grocers by picketing the joint and shutting it down; tell the guys that the only way you can go to work is to sign up with the Teamsters.

These were pretty wild confrontations where the only way we could handle these things was to muster all of our guys out of the hiring hall, bring guys from the Eastbay where necessary. Guys like Paul Heide, for example, did yeoman service. A couple of these fights broke out with guys swinging two-by-fours. Then it broke out again at the Purity Warehouse, down at the foot of Telegraph Hill. We had the thing pretty well in hand and the Teamsters had to call it a day. So, those were dramatic and hectic days.

XVI THE "CONSPIRACY" CASE

And Other Headaches

Ward: Yes, now you're coming into 1950 and '51; the Bridges-Robertson-Schmidt indictment came down in '49, but the trial didn't open until when?

LG: Late '49, as I recall.

Ward: Want to talk about that for a while? Was that before a jury or before Judge Harris?

LG: Before a jury. Before the trial began, I went east with Norman Leonard (one of our attorneys) - must have been around the time of the World Series game. I went back there and talked to Jim Landis; he'd been the hearing officer . . .

Ward: Yes - yes . . .

LG: I talked to him about the trial. He knew all about it and I think that he made up his mind that the thing was unpardonable. I think Landis looked back at that whole '39 hearing as a great experience, and of course it sure changed his life. Finally when it got to the Supreme Court, he was completely vindicated. The only time I think he was really comfortable was when he was in charge of the Civil Aeronautics Authority for awhile -

Ward: SEC (Securities and Exchange Commission), wasn't it?

LG: No - Civil Aeronautics Authority too -

Ward: Later?

LG: Yes. I remember talking to pilots and they thought he was the only guy who had ever come along who made a bit of sense and got a few things done for them.

I put the proposition to Landis and said I'd like to have him handle the trial. He said, "Look, it's quite impossible. I know you don't know much about the judicial system." And I said, "I don't." And he said, "Well, this sort of thing is not done where a man has been a hearings officer once and then turns up as defense counsel."

Obviously, he was not opposed to what we were trying to do; he made one recommendation. He said, "I think you ought to talk to James Lawrence Fly." Fly was one of the heads of the American Civil Liberties Union; he was with Roger Baldwin. He said, "I don't think Fly will handle the case, it's not his dish of tea, but I think it's awfully important that you use him for the pre-trial motions." So I talked to Fly; we arranged and he came out.

As a matter of fact, Fly's daughter, Mary, was married at that time to Telford Taylor, so in some ways it was a bit of a family arrangement. I feel quite positive that Landis talked to Fly and that Fly talked to Telford Taylor, who had been part of the American prosecuting counsel at Nuremberg. He was General Taylor; I guess he was with the Adjutant General's office. So, we had Fly come out just to argue the pre-trial motions. It was one of these hearings where the only people who are interested are lawyers.

Ward: On what constitutes a conspiracy?

LG: Yes, that's right. For example, when Harry got his citizenship finally right after the end of the war in 1945, the government raised no objections of any kind. The big issues as far as Fly was concerned were the statute of limitations and <u>res adjudicata</u>, which I think means that the

LG: thing has been tried and disposed of and it's not to be tried again.

Ward: The thing has been adjudged - let it lie.

LG: That's right, judged and dead. I guess a lot of people now put that in the form of double jeopardy.

Ward: Res adjudicata was used against Tom Mooney effectively, but in the Bridges case it had no effect whatever.

LG: In the Bridges case? It did have its effect --

Ward: Well, in the end it did, but insofar as the trial courts were concerned, no.

LG: No, Harris just paid no attention to it. After all, all a judge has to do in a pre-trial motion, as I understand it, is to say "Denied." I'm not even sure that he is obligated to give any reason.

Ward: I think you're right.

LG: No, the only reason I mention this is because after the trial and after losing before the jury; after the jailing of Harry when the Korean War broke, this case wound its way through the courts and when the Supreme Court finally did rule, the main things they relied on were the issues argued by Fly.

Ward: I think you should discuss the jailing of Harry; why and under what circumstances, and so forth.

LG: Well, as you know, Harry was convicted after the jury was out six or seven days - a long time. (Vincent) Hallinan and (James M.) McInnis had been drawn in as attorneys, in addition to the (ILWU) law firm. Hallinan is of course a very headstrong guy, and whether his tactics were the best in this case, I don't know. Hallinan had this theory that the job of good defense counsel was to be a lightning rod; he will take the heat, and the defendant is the one who wins. I'm not sure that it worked that way; there was so much lightning that everybody got hit.

Ward: I know that they got McInnis in jail -

LG: Well, I'm not sure that's true of lightning rods, but it's true of that situation. No, Vince was sentenced for contempt - he did six months. McInnis got three months. As a matter of fact, Terry and I visited Vince when he was up at McNeil Island -

Ward: Vince went there twice, first for contempt of court; then later he did a year and a half for income tax evasion; they got him, all right. Bill Cleary (William F. Cleary, the attorney who represented the State of California against Tom Mooney) was the go-between -

LG: Cleary is the guy that Vince used occasionally -

Ward: Cleary came to Vince and said - after the Bridges case - "Now, look, if you continue what you're doing, making speeches about how the government wronged Bridges, they're going to get you. They're out after you and they told me and I am their messenger." And sure enough they moved on a technicality which, insofar as legalistics were concerned, had nothing to do with Bridges, Robertson and Schmidt.

LG: I know that Vince was mixed up later in this income tax case - I remember testifying for Vince in that case. He did time twice, first for contempt because Harris was going to put him into jail forthwith; later for the income tax gimmick the government devised.

I remember going to see Artie Samish - I had gotten to know Artie. Artie was an odd guy, very peculiar guy. Perhaps he was the most honest lobbyist in Sacramento. He said, "These legislators are here to be bought. I'm not here to buy. I represent the liquor industry." His attitude to the unions was very simple. He said, "If we waited for the rich people to support the liquor industry we'd go broke. I never heard of a rich guy buying a bottle of beer."

LG: So that, during a period when I was doing some legislative work in Sacramento, when I was head of Labor's Non-Partisan League, was when I first met him; struck up an interesting relationship. I gather he enjoyed my company and I always enjoyed him because he was a great raconteur. I kept up this friendship.

When he was being pushed around by some Senate committee or legislative committee - there was this big hearing on Big Daddy, you know; the unofficial boss of California, stories about him in the magazines.

I remember being at some New Year's Eve gathering down near Montgomery Street, in the offices of (Attorney) Barney Dreyfus and some of the others; I left there and was going down Montgomery Street and I passed the old, old building where Artie Samish had his offices. And I thought I'll go by and say 'hello' to Artie. I went up to his office and there was Artie Samish sitting all by himself on New Year's Eve. All of his so-called cronies and pals had run out on him. We sat around and talked for a while; but before he would talk, he went around and turned on about four or five radios, so that -

Ward: So the bugs couldn't . . . ?

LG: So that his conversation and mine would be completely lost in all the other stuff coming across the airways. He was that kind of a guy.

Ward: Was that conversation really that kind where you had to take those precautions?

LG: No. I thought that Artie was sort of on the spot and you don't run out on a guy just because he's in a jam. I'm not saying that he ever supported labor issues, but the only understanding I ever had with him was that I could ask him to try to stop something - not press for something, just try to stop it.

And he knew enough about these people, the committee heads, like the inside of his hand. He knew how every damn committee operated and

LG: who could be reached, quite easily. I went to Artie when Jim and Vince were sentenced for contempt and where Harris was going to jail them immediately, which would have pulled them out of the trial, and Artie said he would try; in the next day or so, Harris said, "I'll impose sentence when the trial is over." That was the occasion when Vince later went to MacNeil's Island, I'm sure. I know that Vince came back from there saying that the most impossible animal in the whole world was chickens. He had to take care of them for a while. He said they were the most ignorant, stupid, impossible little things - -

Ward: Yes, they are. Well, getting back to Harry's trip to jail.

LG: Okay, this was after the trial. During the trial, of course, they had the usual parade of witnesses and there were some startling ones, you will recall; that Kentucky colonel, who really came apart; Ross, an old party guy. I had known him when he was in San Francisco. He was the head of the PW or something . . . .

Ward: Lawrence Ross?

LG: Yes, Lawrence Ross and then, of course, Merv Rathborne.

Ward: George Wilson?

LG: Yes, George Wilson turned up on the witness stand. John Shoemaker from the '34 strike. He had a distinguished record; then Henry Schrimpf, which is understandable. He was a bitter and impossible enemy of Harry's for years. I'm not sure whether Lundeberg turned up at the trial or not - later on, I think he did - it might have been before Judge Goodman for all I know. Much later on the Korean War broke; June, 1950, I believe was the date.

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LG: Just one last item on the Bridges trial: we had quite a staff of people working on the trial - Elinor Kahn was working on it. Morris Watson did a masterly job with the daily releases; he would at least get a fair shake in the press, or part of it. And of course the membership was being kept advised all the time and they donated a fair amount of money; the attorneys' fees were quite nominal.

At one point in the trial Judge Harris apparently indicated he was prepared to issue a directed verdict in the case of Bob Robertson. There was a discussion of this and Vince was very much opposed - it simply indicated the weakness in the government's case, no question about that. The evidence against Bob Robertson was laughable.

Vince's feeling was, and Bob supported it, that if they allowed Bob's case to be separated, it would simply strengthen the case against Harry and Henry, so they stuck together. Anyway, the verdict came down against them.

In 1950 when the Korean War broke, the union took a position calling for a cease-fire and return to the 38th Parallel. It wasn't the most popular one at the time because the Cold War was damn near at its height and there was a lot of hysteria; the whole thing was built around this world Communist conspiracy and so forth, and this was just the beginnings of it with the North Koreans marching into the South, the poor innocent South Koreans, (Dictator) Syngman Rhee. Donohue, who had been the prosecuting attorney . . .

Ward: "Jiggs" Donohue?

LG: "Jiggs" Donohue - he represented the Department of Justice in the trial. He called for a revocation of bail before Harris. I guess it was Donohue's statement or the judge's, to the effect that "there is no room for minority opinion when this country is at war". War had never been declared, although Truman had the afterthought of going to the UN and at least getting some token troops from the other countries.

LG: All the union position called for was to stop the killings, stop the shooting, cease-fire and both sides go back to the 38th Parallel, the boundary before the war broke. As far as Donohue was concerned, that was treason. Harris agreed with him and revoked bail and Harry went to the clink.

The Circuit Court of Appeals decision was very strong, a very powerful ruling. Harry was released. But, once again, all these forces which had been in operation from the Federal government on down in an attempt to take the union apart were back in full swing.

The Coos Bay Caucus

LG: Anyway, something else had come along and we had scheduled a waterfront caucus in Coos Bay, Oregon, at the same time Harry was in the clink. While the release of Harry was the focal point of the caucus, we had learned that the Secretary of Labor had called a preliminary conference on waterfront security. The ILWU and the MC&S had been excluded from this affair.

What had come along was waterfront screening, again another sign of the Cold War and here was the Coast Guard getting into the act. Waterfront screening was used to decimate some of the crews. Outfits like the MC&S suffered untold casualties - guys were just driven off the ships, they wouldn't be given their papers and the employers would not hire them.

Ward: On what basis was the screening done?

LG: Suspected Communist affiliation. Years later the whole damn thing was declared illegal, but the damage had been done. This was when, if you insisted upon a hearing before the Coast Guard, you could appear there. In other words, say, you were rejected for your Coast Guard pass and you insisted upon a hearing, they would give you a hearing.

LG: The hearing officer would sit there with a folder in front of him and say, "We have evidence that you have been a member of the Communist Party or that you are still a member of the Communist Party, or that you subscribe to certain publications and so forth and so on. What do you have to say for yourself?" Your job then was to try to guess what they had and deny it successfully.

It was like two insane guys, you know; the guy behind the folder was obviously out of his mind and before long he would drive the witness out of his mind, too, with this endless guessing contest. Here was a man's job hanging on it.

Well, in the case of the ILWU, this became a crucial test. Remember, we were talking a bit earlier today about how much of a price is paid in defending union leadership. Does it become one where the union is constantly under the gun, not just of pot-shots from the employers, or an occasional volley from the State Legislature like Governor Stainback or We, The Women who kind of take a shot at your ass when you're not looking? When all the big guns are wheeled in and they start lobbing these shells at you from Washington and where the Justice Department gets in something like the BRS trial; the Coast Guard is waiting in the wings and they move along with Coast Guard screening; obviously what would have happened in the case of the ILWU would have been real decimation of the union.

The position we took became a rather crucial fight in the life of the union; otherwise we might have suffered the same fate as a lot of the good guys in the NMU, and of the entire union in the case of the Marine Cooks and Stewards. A lot of our friends were also screened at the time, like Walter Stack; he probably was run off the job. The position we took was that - -

Ward: This was at the Coos Bay caucus?

LG: The International took that position before the Coos Bay caucus and then had to fight for it at the caucus where some of the arch redbaiters

LG: were just out of their minds. The position we took was that if the Coast Guard wanted to screen on army and navy jobs on the ground of so-called national security, we wouldn't object to that too much. We didn't like the whole idea of screening; of course we were opposed to it, but if the guys wanted to get their Coast Guard passes to get those jobs, we were not going to make that the issue; but we would not permit screening on commercial jobs.

There was a small-fry, self-appointed red-baiter who had been a member of the ACTU; Kelley - not Tim - was his name, from Local 34. This guy actually had the temerity to be on the phone from Coos Bay; it's a small town - everybody knows what's going on. Chances are that even the telephone operator could be related to one of our guys in a small town like that.

He was on the phone regularly to Tobin, who was then Secretary of Labor, talking about the caucus and what he ought to do next and so forth. It was pretty hair-raising stuff, obviously a whole cabal trying to move in and take over. On that score the caucus was rather crucial.

Another issue was fomented, but it was not one on which we were going to back away. Bear in mind around 1949 you had all that hysteria around Peekskill. Remember when Paul Robeson was due to sing there, his concert was broken up by a bunch of Legionnaires and rightwingers, people stoned and beaten up.

Naturally we supported Robeson and condemned the whole thing. Robeson had become an honorary member of our union. At that time I think he was the only honorary member. Later on, we added a couple of others, Rockwell Kent and Vince Hallinan. To become an honorary member of the ILWU meant a unanimous vote by the convention and under a set of interesting rules where if somebody wanted to object, they simply rose and objected; no reason had to be given. So to become an honorary member really meant something.

LG: It was not like one of these things that you just adopted another resolution on. Well, Paul Robeson was an honorary member - the only honorary member as I recall - and some of this group came in with a resolution that we take away Paul Robeson's honorary membership, even though the caucus had no authority to do this. That belonged to the convention. That we take it away from Paul Robeson and give it to Jackie Robinson. Well, some of us really took out after that one.

We said, if there is a proposal here for Jackie Robinson to be an honorary member, we'd consider that. After all, he had broken the color line in baseball, but we'd like to know how many guys in the Portland delegation would be willing to work with Jackie Robinson if he decided to take a job on the Portland waterfront where they had no blacks. There was a real cleavage on that issue. Luckily we won.

Paul Robeson retained his honorary membership and the caucus finally shaped up fairly well, even though a couple of ambitious guys took the only suite at the North Bend Hotel setting up unofficial headquarters preparatory to taking over the reins of office. But nothing happened and by and large the membership hung tough. They adopted a position on Coast Guard screening which was very important.

Ward: The position you outlined a few minutes ago?

LG: Yes, and we did not change our position on the Korean War - we stuck with it; I mean the International stuck with it. The caucus however followed the lead of several of our big locals and supported the government position on the Korean War.

Ward: That position was pretty well implemented in actual work practice, wasn't it? The position you took at that caucus?

LG: On screening?

Ward: I mean, the employers and the stevedoring companies went along with it, didn't they?

LG: It wasn't a question whether the stevedoring companies went along with it - there was a wee bit more work for the dispatchers because every dispatcher knew where the army, navy piers were and where the commercial piers were. If you were being dispatched in San Francisco to Pier 35, you knew perfectly well that that was a commercial job. If on the other hand, you were sent over to the army base, that was quite different. So, we got some very funny feedback later on, most of which was really hilarious.

For example, in the case of Seattle they had some very arrogant Coast Guard guys or MPs (military policemen), who had a tendency to hard-time our guys going to work at the army or navy base, so there was a good deal of groaning about it and complaining.

Well, those installations were a fair distance away from the hiring hall. The commercial piers were close by, not exactly walking distance but maybe a half a mile at the most; and there were some characters in Seattle who had never given up the whole beef on the Red issue.

As a matter of fact, they were the ones who made it so tough for a guy like Bert Nelson to go back into the local after he had been underground when the Communist party sent some of its members underground during the Smith Act trials; they really gave him a hard time after that. They voted him down a couple of times, so that Bert had a rough time.

They went so far as to say that our position on the Coast Guard screening was just a very ingenious scheme to give the Reds the better jobs on the commercial work, you see. Well, I don't think anybody ever took it seriously but it shows how people start to think and how way off the beam they go.

Of course, luckily we had a guy like Bill Gettings up there; he was a tower of strength and he's the kind of a guy who would take on all comers. But the Coast Guard screening issue was big. I recall it was in 1951 or '52 when they suddenly decided to attempt Coast Guard screening

LG: at one of the commercial piers. It was on the north side of the waterfront in San Francisco - which pier I'm trying to recall, I think it was State Line, I'm not positive; it was around pier 27. I'm inclined to think that's right, but I could be wrong on that. They turned up there - -

Ward: The MPs did?

LG: Yes, or guys from the Coast Guard, or whoever they were, demanding Coast Guard clearances. Luckily one of the officials got word of that very fast and our men just stood around the dock and said, "Nobody's going in there - nobody is showing any card whether he has one or not." Because there were guys there who had Coast Guard clearance and other men who didn't. We said there would be no Coast Guard screening on this commercial work and we made it stick.

The Coast Guard made a lot of noise for a few hours and finally called it off. So, it was a rather important showdown - it was another effort to see whether somehow they could spread the thing. Bear in mind, as far as the Coast Guard was concerned, the screening applied to everyone on the waterfront. The union's position was that we would go along with it in the case of army and navy piers, but not in the case of commercial work.

More Trouble In Hawaii

Ward: I see. Now, you said the other day that the period of harassment of the union extended from '47 to '53. What other examples of harassment do you think are worth discussing now?

LG: Well, you had the running beef in Hawaii right before the '49 strike, when they had the so-called "reluctant 39". Those were some un-American Activities hearings that took place and there were some 39 people, the big majority of whom were ILWU members who were called to testify and all of them refused. There was no let-up after the '49 strike, even though there finally was a settlement.

LG: I'm trying to remember the date of the Smith Act cases. Bear in mind, the key defendant in the Smith Act case in Hawaii was Jack Hall. As a matter of fact, not only was he the key defendant - Jack Kawano testified against him. He had been the head of the Longshore union years before, but he had sort of dropped out of the whole thing; the union really went by him, is what happened; it moved much faster than he could have.

Ward: Let's see - by the Smith Act trial, you mean Hall was accused under the Smith Act, of what?

LG: Let me try to recall the exact indictment, which is to "aid and advocate the teaching of the violent overthrow of the U. S. Government." Bear in mind, no overt acts were ever called for.

Ward: I see.

LG: In other words, ideas were on trial, or particularly what you might have circulated; like one of the key witnesses was some guy who was not a bad egg - he wasn't too bright, really - and he had worked with the union for a while. I think he was making a trip back on a ship and somebody gave him a bundle of literature; he didn't even know what the literature was - never bothered to read any of it.

He testified that he had this duffle bag full of literature, so he in effect was helping to promote this conspiracy to teach and advocate, that was it. So, in the case of Jack Hall, he and six others were indicted. There were Charlie and Aileen Fujimoto, Koji Aryoshi, Jack Hall - that makes four, Dwight "Jim" Freeman, that's five and John Reinecke, six - and a man named Jack Kimoto. Anyway -

Ward: Reinecke was a teacher, wasn't he?

LG: Yes, he was a teacher - he and his wife were both teachers. By the way, there have been some recent developments with the Reineckes that give you a bit of faith, after years of being blackballed, you know, couldn't teach. John floundered

LG: around doing odd jobs; I don't think his wife worked particularly. Finally, he did some research work for Art Rutledge of the Teamsters Union down there, but always maintained a very dignified posture.

Last year there was a push put on in Hawaii to have a hearing on the Reinecke case. The hearing concluded that the Reineckes had been fired unjustly and the Legislature adopted a bill to compensate them for the years they had lost in terms of wages and pension benefits and so forth. It comes when they're both quite along in years.

There's a sort of poetic justice in the thing and there was a bit of poetic justice when Aryoshi, years after the Smith Act trial, went to visit China. He had met Chou En Lai and Mao Tse Tung when the Red Army was headquartered in Xian and Yenan, and of course, he was very warmly greeted when he went there again.

The Star-Bulletin, which was awfully anxious to get some stories on China - there's a large Chinese population in Hawaii - hired Aryoshi to do a series of stories on his trip to China. And when I saw Koji I had only one question of him, "Did you charge enough?" I doubt if he did; he was such an honest soul, he would think it was far more important to get the articles in the paper.

After the indictment came down, the FBI went to Dave Thompson - remember, he was a war veteran, an ex-Marine; he lost a leg at Iwo Jima and decided he wanted to live in Hawaii after the war. He was one of those we had come to the Labor School and he found his forte very quickly in the ILWU by doing educational work and putting out the Voice of the ILWU down there.

I've always been very fond of Dave, a very good guy and as honest as the day is long. At times he's very amusing - he's so deadly serious, you know. I'll never forget at one stage of the 1946 strike, Dave and I were talking after negotiations. It had been a very bitter session,

LG: very bad, and to some things looked a lot worse. I didn't think so because there were indications that the strike was in very good shape.

Dave said, "Lou, you gotta do something, you gotta do something." "What do you mean, I gotta do something?" "Well," he says, "one of the things you're taught when you are in the armed services is that any leader in a situation like this keeps things moving." "I don't know," I said, "I've never been in the armed services - I only had a very brief and amusing spell in the ROTC. I don't know why you have to do anything. I think in a case of a strike like this, you just do nothing - just sit."

He said, "Why?" So I said, "Somewhere along the line the employers are going to make a mistake or crack, that's all." But Dave was wonderfully adventurous of mind and very purist, very hard working.

Ward: The FBI came to him - why?

LG: The FBI wanted to make a proposition to him and he used some excuse and said he couldn't do it right then because he had some appointment he had to keep and would they come back another day. So they set up another date. Well, when they came back a second time his home was wired by us. Bob McElrath was sitting in the basement with a recording machine and there was a microphone planted and they recorded the whole thing.

Burris and Condon were the two FBI guys; Bob McElrath recorded the whole conversation. Their proposition to Dave was very forthright and very simple: if he would talk to Jack Hall about cooperating with the FBI which, of course, means turning State's evidence and doing what he could to jail others, they could make it six defendants instead of seven. We had the whole thing put on a record, tried to play it in the Smith Act case; it was ruled out; although we used it a couple of times when talking on the Smith Act case.

Other Legal Harassment

LG: So, all I'm trying to say is that this vendetta did not stop. The general atmosphere in terms of redbaiting was stepped up, not just with the Smith Act cases, it's when they moved to put the Marine Cooks and Stewards out of business. They also jailed Bryson for false affidavits; it's when they went after Maurice Travis (of Mine-Mill).

I recall calling Telford Taylor to see whether he would cooperate and give a legal hand to the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, under the gun of Taft-Hartley and the Subversive Activities Control Board - we used to call it the SCAB board. That's when they went after Mine-Mill, so that the harassment was going on continuously. It was almost one continuous crisis that went from '47 until those cases were disposed of.

Ward: Quite a long time.

LG: A span of nine years and somehow or other, the Smith Act cases sort of parallel in dates; it was a long stretch.

(Interview 23: 22 August, 1978)

Ward: Lou, let's check up on the dates which were uncertain.

LG: Well, I wasn't too far off, Estolv. As you know, Bridges, Robertson and Schmidt were convicted in 1950. Well, July, 1949 was the time of the Marseille convention and the meeting of the WFTU, the one I attended.

Ward: And that's the one that Harry couldn't attend because he was out on bail?

LG: Right. The matter had been taken up at the convention and the convention voted to attend -

LG: that was the 1949 convention. Harry was designated to go, and Johnny Meletta. Inasmuch as other things were cooking, nobody knowing exactly what the outcome would be, I was designated to go in the event Harry couldn't make it.

When he applied to go to Marseille, at first, the government indicated that they would insist on raising the bail. I think he was out on heavy bail. Then the government came along and took the position that they simply wanted to prohibit him from going; the net result being that I went in his place.

Then the Korean War broke - that was somewhere around June 1950. We went into a pretty rough period. Bear in mind again that you had this whole cabal moving in on the union from all sides - both the administrative part of the government and particularly the judicial part under Tom Clark.

While we had not yet been expelled from the CIO, there was every indication that we would be unless we backed away on the basic principle of autonomy, namely the right of the membership to make the final decision. Somewhere along the line, the CIO said when it came to economic matters the membership had that right.

But as to political questions, all of a sudden they would try to impose the discipline, let us say, of a labor party without a labor party; if a decision was made at the top on certain endorsements, that you just had to go along. Our position was that the membership still had the final say. That's what autonomy meant and those were the things we were guaranteed at the time we affiliated.

I think I mentioned to you Harry's position on the Korean War, that he was opposed to any war, that there ought to be a cease-fire and try to resolve things in other ways. This also became a beef within the union with much of the union going along with the government, perhaps with a few reservations; maybe not the same sort

LG: of jingoism that Truman and others had in mind. Then the developments in Washington: a move to establish what they called "security regulations" on the waterfront, things later developed into the whole Coast Guard screening and so forth.

When the conference was held on setting up these security arrangements, the administration dipped into the ranks of the ILWU; in other words, some locals were invited to attend but the International was completely by-passed.

Ward: I bet the Portland local was invited.

LG: I'm not sure they attended. I have the recollection that Local 10, Sandeen, might have been there. I think somebody was there from Local 34; whether other locals were there, I'm not sure. The session was held back in Washington and we saw the security thing as just an attempt to to spread the Cold War and redbaiting directly into the ranks of the union.

It was a counterpart of the Taft-Hartley affidavits and everything else that was going on. The un-American Activities Committee was in full swing at the time. The Hollywood Ten (ten movie actors, writers and directors who were called before the House un-American Activities Committee) had been pretty well chopped up when they refused to take the Fifth. They took the First Amendment, put up a fight on that and lost, if you will recall. They were cited for contempt.

When Harry was jailed, the sugar workers walked out in protest in Hawaii. It was during the period when he was in jail that we had the caucus in Coos Bay.

Ward: How long did the sugar workers stay out?

LG: It was a one-day protest - maybe a little more. Well, he was freed on bail September first, but that was after the decision by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals; I was trying to recall the names of the judges involved. The two who were in the majority for his release were William Healey and William E. Orr; they are the ones who

LG: used the expression that they had to set their faces like "flint against the storm." Harry's case went to the Supreme Court, of course - and the Supreme Court reversed the BRS conviction on June 26, 1953. You recall that I told you that we had gotten James Lawrence Fly -

Ward: Yes, to make the motion?

LG: To argue the pre-trial motions - actually it was around these pre-trial motions - not on the trial itself - that the Supreme Court based its reversal; the man who argued the case for us was Telford Taylor. Telford Taylor was the son-in-law of James Lawrence Fly. Taylor had also been chief U. S. prosecutor at Nuremberg.

Ward: Was he chief?

LG: For a while. I think that (Supreme Court Justice) Robert H. Jackson was the chief for a while, Taylor was assistant; and when Jackson left there, Taylor took over. He carried the rank of General - I guess from the Adjutant General's office. I recall talking to him about the thing and he explained that he didn't handle trial work, that he handled primarily or entirely appellate matters.

Those would be cases, I guess, before the appellate courts, primarily Federal - or perhaps, State too - and the Supreme Court. I think Norm Leonard went back to join him at the argument. He and Norm hit it off very well; Taylor carried the burden of the thing and the decision of Judge Harris was reversed.

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Ward: All right, we were discussing -

LG: About Telford Taylor; the trial took place before Federal Judge Goodman. The government had two strings to its bow. There was a conspiracy indictment. There was also a civil charge, namely, that Harry's citizenship be revoked without criminal penalties.

LG: Everybody assumed the case was finished; most people were just flabbergasted when the government announced it was not through; they then proceeded to institute the civil charge which had not been dropped; it just lay pending the outcome of the criminal case.

Ward: Would the statute of limitations apply there?

LG: I should think so, but I don't know enough about the law - or make the fine distinction that you weren't really in jeopardy in the same way - that they just took your citizenship away. I'm sure the same points were argued again before the judge that were argued in the criminal conspiracy trial.

This was the trial before Goodman without a jury; it was a civil case and I think the attorneys decided they would go before Goodman and try to avoid some of the hysteria that had plagued the previous trial. And bear in mind, the previous conviction came down in that period when the Cold War was really heating up.

Anyway, we decided we should try to get Telford Taylor to handle the case before Goodman. I recall going back east, on something else as well, and sitting down with Telford Taylor and asking him to handle the trial. He said, "Okay" he would. I think he, himself, had gotten very deeply into the Bridges case. This business of endless harassment going as far back as an attempt in Congress to pass a bill of attainder . .

Ward: Yes, I know.

LG: And there had been the (Madame Frances) Perkins hearings, then the Immigration hearing, then the Landis hearing; the Sears*hearing, which wound up with a Supreme Court victory for Harry; the conspiracy case which also wound up in the Supreme Court - this just went on and on. And here was the Goodman case. Taylor felt he really ought to see the thing through. He came out here; I recall he asked us to arrange a place for him where he could stay and work. We found

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* Before Judge Charles B. Sears.

LG: a place for him at the Huntington on Nob Hill and got him a small suite there, so that he had a desk to work at and keep his papers there.

The most startling thing came out of Taylor just before the trial began. I went by there one day to see what else he needed, perhaps to deliver some additional documents. He said, "I think you ought to know this, Lou, I've never handled a trial case in my life." So, here was Telford Taylor handling his first trial case before Judge Goodman.

Well, we had all kinds of trepidations about Goodman, tried to find out what sort of a man he was like. He lived a life of his own, had an attractive suite at the Fairmont (Hotel), a home in Woodside. He used to ride all the time - he was a horseman. I think he was married to quite a wealthy woman -

Ward: I was going to say that's more money than a Federal judge makes.

LG: Yes, he appeared to be in fairly good shape. I know Ben Swig (owner of the Fairmont) was a good friend of his - they used to see each other socially. Perhaps that's why he stayed at the Fairmont.

Ward: Goodman was Jewish, wasn't he?

LG: Yes.

Ward: So was Harris.

LG: Harris was born Jewish, I think and -

Ward: Changed to Catholic?

LG: Yes. He went apostate. But as you know, Goodman finally came along with an excellent decision in 1954 or '55. It could have been at that trial where Lundeberg turned up -

Ward: Oh!

LG: I believe so. I don't think he turned up at the conspiracy case; I think it was at that trial, anyway, that wound up the case.

LG: Telford Taylor continued fairly close to us in the years afterwards. I used to stop by and see him whenever I was in New York. I got to know him and his wife quite well. Very pleasant guy, very bright and quite a good pianist; loved to compose marches, of all things.

Ward: No wonder, he was a general . . . .

LG: NAW! I think his military background was limited to the adjutant-general's office; but maybe you're right, maybe that got to him. But whether he had any political ambitions, I don't know. I know he was touted for a while as a logical candidate for the U. S. Senate out of New York, or a state office. That wound up the Bridges case, finally.

Ward: Did that wind up the harassment?

LG: Yes, harassment in that form. It didn't wind up harassment of the union, not by any manner of means; later in the fifties all kinds of people in the union were being hauled in before the un-American Activities Committee. As a matter of fact, that started in Hawaii in 1949. That was the reluctant 39, most of whom were ILWU members; all of them took the Fifth. Later in that same decade I was hauled before the un-American Activities Committee, before the Eastland Committee, before the McClellan Committee at different times.

Ward: In the forties?

LG: Fifties, fifties - all in the fifties, as I recall. On the Smith Act the indictment was in 1951 in Hawaii - that was when Jack Hall was indicted, August 28, 1951. I was down in Hawaii at the time. As a matter of fact, Terry and the girls were there. I recall now, we were in sugar negotiations at that time because the contract expired September 1. But I had been down there a bit earlier because of the Lanai pineapple strike; it was a strike that lasted almost seven months.

Ward: Wasn't Lanai the place where in the early days of organizing the guys had to sneak over at night in boats?

LG: Lanai is one of the places where they had to use sampans because if they arrived by plane - I guess the airport was open by then - the company knew every single person who came on or off that island, so they took to the small fishing boats; the fishermen would take them over; not too far away, just across the channel. That's all there is on the island.

Ward: Just one company?

LG: Just one company, the Hawaiian Pineapple Company which in turn is owned by Castle & Cooke.

The reason I recall being down there is because we were in sugar negotiations. We'd gotten out very late and I had driven Jack home; it must have been around one or two o'clock in the morning because I dropped him at his house and promptly headed off to where we were staying - up in Manoa. We had rented a small place up towards the hills. The University of Hawaii is in the area. We had some friends living there; as a matter of fact, I think it was Meyer Symonds, who lived not too far from us. The girls used to spend some time at their home and I think he helped us find the place where we stayed.

Anyway, I headed right for home and I couldn't have been asleep more than an hour or so when the phone rang and it was Yoshiko; they had just come and picked up Jack and hauled him off to the clink. Imagine, this great FBI, you see, in Hawaii where of course you could escape in just five seconds by walking on the water; the secret roundup just before daybreak - all part of their staging; these dangerous criminals.

So, Terry and I gathered the kids together and went down to Jack's house, started getting on the phone, waking people up to find out what the score was. The sugar committee was due to meet that morning early; we started around seven o'clock the next morning - and Jack had been hauled off to the clink by the U. S. Marshal. I don't think there had even been a bail hearing yet. Bail was posted later that day.

LG: Well, the sugar committee went along with my suggestion that we deliberately suspend all negotiations. We announced that Jack, as far as we were concerned, was absolutely essential to the negotiations, which would not be resumed until Jack was available.

Ward: The other side agreed to that?

LG: Who? The employers? No - no, the employers just stood to one side. They kept insisting later on that they really had nothing to do with this. How do you know the truth in these things? As I told you, I discovered that there wasn't all that much uniformity in the employers' thinking, necessarily.

The Big Five would hammer out a policy, so-called, and the respective employers had what amounted to a veto power. In other words, unless they could get unanimity on a particular program, nothing was done. It gave any one of the agencies strength out of all proportion to its economic weight. I suppose from their point of view it was the only effective way of holding their team together.

Now, it could very well be that the employers as a group and I'm inclined to think that guys like Blaisdell - I'm not sure that Blaisdell was still there at that time; he might have been eased out - Dwight Steele - as to whether Steele or Blaisdell were party to this thing, I have doubts.

Ward: You didn't totally dislike either of those fellows, did you?

LG: No, Steele was a little more abrasive, a little more difficult to get along with. I got along with Blaisdell quite well and liked him as a person. He was an interesting character; came from around Butte, Montana - a bit of a cowboy. He wound up ranching, not too far from Carson City - Minden. It's right at the foot of the Kingsbury grade. I remember visiting him there a year or two after that. They were raising those very beautiful sheep - heavy wool.

Ward: Is he still alive, Blaisdell?

LG: No, he died about three or four years ago. He was an interesting character. No, he must have still been down there because he played a very important role in the Lanai strike.

But, I spoke to the Marshal and said, "Look, things are completely loused up; there's going to be no negotiations and there'll probably be a sugar strike, thanks to the way you have handled this thing." Oh, he didn't want any part of that. I think he was just a local yokel and sure as hell didn't want to upset the whole apple cart in Hawaii. They had gone through the '49 strike. We won that and everybody knew it.

Not too long after that, in early 1950, the employers hired 15 or 16 guys in violation of the contract. Our guys walked out. The company fell all over itself and let their guys go at once; so the waterfront was in good shape. People in Hawaii were breathing a sigh of relief.

Sure, Lanai was on strike but Hawaii could go on almost untouched in its main pursuits. This would have an enormous impact in Hawaiian Pine; it turned out later that the company took fantastic losses; but the economy and Waikiki, the flow of tourists, shipping, sugar were all functioning. The whole prospect of another confrontation didn't particularly appeal to anyone down there.

Anyway, I finally told the Marshal, we're not going to proceed unless we can meet with Jack Hall. He wasn't out on bail yet. The Marshal said, "Well, I can't release him, but there's a good sized office down there next to mine and if you want to come down there, come down." So, I recall taking the whole committee and going down to the Marshal's office.

Of course, we wanted the stuff to get in the papers, and it did. There was a clear, sharp demonstration of support, a very quick reaction to the Smith Act indictment. Bear in mind, all the anti-Communist hysteria that had been going

LG: on there for a long time; the best thing to do was to hit it between the eyes as quickly as you could.

We met down there. There weren't enough chairs; I remember guys sitting on top of the file cabinets and some of them on the floor. It wasn't all that big a room, I guess about the size of this kitchen, maybe a little bit smaller - jammed . . .

Ward: Did they bring Jack in?

LG: Jack was brought in.

Ward: He was a prisoner, but he was there?

LG: Yes, and photographers came in taking pictures of us.

Ward: Wonderful publicity!

LG: Yeah, although they took some very unkind photos; but that's the way they are. The important thing was that we signified as quickly as possible that the union was with Jack. Everybody talked about it. We said, "Okay, we'll wait until the contract runs out and strike, unless Jack is made available." By the end of that afternoon he was released on bail.

Ward: This was before a judge?

LG: Yes, I forget which judge it was. Anyway that was when he was indicted; the trial itself started on November 7 of '52. I think that's the date of the October Revolution, isn't it? (Laughter)

Ward: I really wouldn't know - I could look it up.

LG: Well, anyway, that trial went on for a long time. It stretched on until -

Ward: There were six other defendants?

LG: Seven in all, right. That was the incident around which Burris and Condon of the FBI visited

LG: Dave Thompson - and his room was wired before they got there with Bob McElrath doing the recording. There's one amusing sidelight, although the thing that came through clearest on the tape was that if Jack would cooperate they could make it six instead of seven; a blatant effort to get him to turn stool pigeon and invent stories about the other defendants.

The amusing sidelight is that McElrath says that while he was doing this tape down in the basement he had to keep very quiet. Hawaii houses are not that soundproof. He discovered that he just had to take a leak. He had no place to go. Mac liked his beer, and he figured the logical thing was to finish a can of beer and use it a second time.

Anyway, the trial went on to June of the following year; there were a number of interruptions . . .

Ward: Well, it started in 1952 and went to June, 1953.

LG: Yes. You had the holiday season there, and the courts don't overwork themselves during that time of the year. Hawaii is a funny place; they start wishing a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year after Thanksgiving and they don't stop wishing you a Happy New Year until some time late in January. On that score it's a very social community.

Ward: Wanted to make sure they're good Christians?

LG: Not particularly; a lot of it is part of the whole sociability. The holiday season is a time of very intensive family entertainment - people making the rounds of each other's homes and things like New Year's Eve are typical. Even around the plantation communities, a guy would make the rounds of all of his close friends - not everybody he knew; obviously, he couldn't make it - and have a drink with each of them . . .

Ward: Must get a little rugged?

LG: Yeah, and you get some wild stories about it, too.

LG: But the Seven were found guilty and the entire ILWU walked out in protest; stopped work. Local 142 called a special convention of the entire union in Hawaii. By that time it was a merged local; they called the special convention to blast the results of the trial, pledge their support, and continue to fight on the issue.

That case kicked around in the courts and went to the Appellate Court and Hall and the others were acquitted on January 20, 1958 - that followed the reversal of Smith Act cases by the Supreme Court. The Smith Act case was a tag-end affair. Smith Act cases had gone on in New York and you remember the one in Los Angeles and other parts of the country.

So that there had been any number of Smith Act cases, much earlier. I recall that the first changing of the tide on the whole Cold War, the Smith Act cases and the endless red-baiting, was after the confrontation between "Jumping Joe" McCarthy and (Joseph) Welch -

Ward: The Army case?

LG: Yes, the Army case. It was when Eisenhower finally got angry and where some Back Bay Bostonians got in the act; God knows they were no leftwingers, but strong adherents of the basic principles of democracy, and only then was there a change in atmosphere.

The more I look back at that period, Truman was just horrendous. I know that now he's being dolled up and a lot of people are having second thoughts about what a wonderful man he was - a modest haberdasher. I don't think anything could be further from the truth. After all, he was the architect of the Cold War. You can say that Churchill was, but Truman toddled along right after him.

It was Fulton, Missouri where Churchill made his "Iron Curtain" speech when Truman was in power, and it was Truman who was reelected in 1948. It was under Truman that Joe McCarthy really got going; even though he gave lip service to opposition of Taft Hartley, he collapsed completely on the issue.

LG: As to whether he did all he should, I don't know. A number of us felt that he could have done more to make sure that the right senators were available. So, that whole Truman era, at least for a union like ours, and I think for most of the labor movement, was bad; he was the guy who took Murray completely in tow. He gave him the key to the kitchen, or whatever it was, in the White House, so that Murray had access all the time.

Ward: The key to the toilet, you mean?

LG: Well, maybe, perhaps or if you get into the house by way of the toilet, but Murray had access to Truman and Truman knew the importance of buttering a man like this. And did so successfully. That was when the expulsions took place in the CIO. The whole atmosphere was nationally reflected, of course, in the courts and in the unions and by the employers.

Had it not been for Taft-Hartley and that whole era, I don't think you would have had the kind of violent lengthy beefs; every one of these strikes were long strikes - the '48 strike ran around 95 days, the warehouse strike in '49 lasted 110 days, the strike of the longshoremen in Hawaii lasted 178 days - almost six months; no two ways about it, the employers felt full of beans.

The economy was taking a tumble; towards 1949, unemployment was very heavy until we found ourselves in Korea, again under the Truman leadership. So everybody brushes off these things and talks about Truman firing (General Douglas) MacArthur . . .

Ward: The buck stopped here?

LG: Yes, these, in my opinion, were awfully simplistic statements. I think MacArthur was the kind of a guy any man who was President of the United States would have to fire sooner or later. Either that or resign himself to being a doormat. I think that was the way MacArthur was, and there was no taming him. If there was any guy who had a complete God complex, it was MacArthur. So, those were just rough, rough years.

LG: Eisenhower went in around 1952 and there was no immediate change; under Dulles (John Foster Dulles, former secretary of state) the atmosphere changed almost not at all. Eisenhower did manage to extricate us from Korea - went back exactly to what we had been talking about, the 38th Parallel. We happened to leave an awful lot of American kids behind and an awful lot of Koreans and Chinese -

Ward: Do you want to discuss the Hawaii trial in detail? Is there anything interesting in the testimony or the witnesses?

LG: Part of the witnesses were just the usual trained snakes, you know, or trained cobras, as Hallinan used to call them. Paul Crouch was down there; those were the guys who came in as the experts on communism. After all the Smith Act indictments, I've tried to recall the exact phraseology; it's something like "the conspiracy to teach the advocacy of."

In other words, this whole thing was like a three-step affair; the objective of the prosecution was to boil the thing down to the conspiracy to teach. Consequently, my giving you a pamphlet becomes a conspiracy to teach or if the two of us give a third person a pamphlet it is definitely a conspiracy, right?

So this was the device that was used; they had these same trained characters from trial to trial on the government payroll, all the time. Louis Budenz was one, Manning Johnson was another, Paul Crouch was another: they had a whole series of the them.

Ward: Ross - Lawrence Ross?

LG: Lawrence Ross, whether he turned up again I don't know - he turned up in the Bridges case, but he was pretty thoroughly ripped apart there. He was the Kentucky colonel whose name was Rosenstein, I think it was. They tried to bury his whole background until I believe it was Elinor Kahn who dug it up; she was on our research staff for the Bridges-Robertson-Schmidt case.

LG: We also dug up a lot of stuff on their false testimony about Harry being at a meeting of the Communist party where he was elected to its Central Committee. He was in Stockton at the same time; we even had the testimony of a couple who got married and they remembered being at a dinner party in Stockton where we had a dinner for our guys; all the plane schedules and everything else literally made it impossible to meet these dates. That didn't bother the government.

You might remember that we had a pretty active campaign demanding perjury indictments against people like Manning Johnson and Crouch, Ross.

Ward: What about the defense witnesses - anything of interest there?

LG: I'd say that the only thing of interest was a couple of people - one was Mayor Wilson; he was no longer mayor at that time.

Ward: What was his first name?

LG: John Wilson -

Ward: He was mayor of Honolulu?

LG: He was mayor of Honolulu for a long time. He was an engineer. He was the man who conceived the idea of digging a tunnel through the Pali to go from one side of the island to the other.

Ward: The road went over the Pali.

LG: Yes, because going over the Pali was a very difficult road and he was the one who engineered the tunnel; very difficult job, lots of water, lots of rain up there. It is called the Wilson Tunnel.

Ward: The tunnel was built?

LG: The tunnel was built and I believe he was the engineer on the job. He appeared on behalf of Jack. Another man who appeared for Jack was Delbert Metzger. Metzger was a wonderful old Federal judge - -

Ward: You told me all about him.

LG: Who had the balls to stand up to the military government and threw out martial law. There were other witnesses for Jack, but there was nothing really to contravert in the trial. In other words, what do you argue? Did Jack get some of this literature? He probably did, sure. They had this weak character who had worked for our union at one time; he brought over a bag of this literature, and they made a big thing of that. He was coming back on the ship anyway.

Ward: That gives us a kind of a roundup it seems to me.

The Man Who Turned

LG: The key guy against the union was Jack Kawano. Now Jack Kawano had been one of the founders of the longshore union in Honolulu. He was the president of Longshore Local 136 in Hawaii; that was before the merger of all the locals down there. He was president at the time when they had the first National Labor Relations Board election which we finally won, sometime around the end of 1940, maybe 1941.

The war came along. During the war, Jack Kawano was completely shunted aside by the military. They put him on some sort of a little Manpower Commission.

Ward: Wasn't he the guy who started to raise tomatoes?

LG: He went out and started raising tomatoes; wasn't working on the waterfront. After the war, he was active in the rebuilding of the union. I got to know him very well and spent quite a bit of time with him.

Ward: What made him turn?

LG: He was a bit of a recluse in the sense that while I used to see him a fair amount, he was never as intimate as some of the other guys

LG: in terms of sitting around, having coffee and just bullshitting. It's hard to put your finger on what makes a guy turn in a situation like that; he stuck with the union through the '49 strike.

As a matter of fact, I recall he came to the mainland and spoke to a Local 6 meeting when the warehousemen were on strike, sort of linking up the two battles; he seemed to stand up okay. I think what might have made him turn was that the union moved right past him. In other words, he played one role in the formative days. The moment the sugar organization took on an enormous amount of mobility and strength, automatically the relationship of forces changed.

When they began to consolidate the union into Local 142, perhaps some longshoremen thought they had made a mistake by not having a more important place. Kawano continued to be the head of the longshoremen, but the president of 142 then was Tony Rania, as I recall, from Waialua, a Filipino; Constantine Samson, a Filipino from Waimanalo plantation was vice-president. That plantation is now out of business. Newton Miyagi was secretary. Later on Carl Demaso became president.

Now, maybe Kawano felt that with sugar and pineapple and with the growth of organization, his role was diminished or that he was being forced to take a back seat; some of the guys down there, for example, felt that the Filipinos were using their racial bloc or because of their racial importance were playing an undue role. There was quite a clash to make sure that there would be some balance of leadership. Whether Kawano was affected by that, I don't know. I've never gotten any indication in any conversation I had with him.

Ward: It wasn't economic?

LG: It could have been; I don't think he wound up getting either fame or fortune out of his duplicity. As a matter of fact, later on he wound up as a janitor in a theatre in Los Angeles.

Ward: Well, what did his testimony do among the members of the union?

LG: Almost none, because by that time he had dropped out of activity. I remember going to the trial one day and just sitting there glaring at him; I didn't know what the hell had gotten into this guy.

He just looked right through everybody to the back wall; obviously well rehearsed and doing a real job both on Jack and the other defendants in terms of their linkage with these other key witnesses - the guys who were the real theoretical experts - by showing that there had been a Communist party in Hawaii and that Jack had been part of it; that they were active; that they had literature; that they had classes; that they had influence in the union.

Ward: Did Kawano place Jack in a Communist meeting?

LG: Yes - yes, regularly. Kawano, after that, faded out of the scene. It wasn't that much of a loss. There were other competent guys who had come along in the '49 Longshore strike.

Again things go through your mind as to why a number of Hawaiians left Hawaii, who had been very active in the building of the longshore union and helping out in sugar; a number of the guys who wound up on the island of Lanai, helping to organize the pineapple workers. Something had moved past these people or they didn't quite keep up with it; that could easily turn to bitterness.

We have talked about the whole period of the Red Scare, Taft-Hartley and the tough days, and I thought it was more like ten years.

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LG: I guess the reason I put it at ten years, instead of another period, was that after 1955 there was a change in the national atmosphere. I think it was around 1955 when they reversed the Smith Act convictions, so that when I say --

Ward: Why, if they reversed the Smith Act convictions, did it take them three years for Jack Hall to be freed of the charges?

LG: I think it's just the rate at which these things go through the courts. As I recall, there was no great surprise on anybody's part that the court reversed the convictions in Hawaii. It could be even that through vindictiveness on the part of courts and judges, prosecution, Federal government, they figure, okay, the longer you drag it out, the more damage can be done.

Wasn't it Shakespeare who put the words in Hamlet's mouth - one of the reasons for justifiable suicide being the law's delay? So, the only reason I put it that way is because I really see the thing as sort of tapering off in 1955.

Ward: Does that fairly give the picture of the period of harassment?

LG: Yes and no; let me give you an example. It took a combination of various forms of strategy to meet the whole era. After the passage of Taft-Hartley, the employers attempted to utilize it for a showdown and kick the union around in the 1948 Longshore strike.

Literally you had no choice but to fight, but it also meant a strategy where you couldn't back away from a legitimate beef. You had to take them on, but it would be a bleeding operation, both on the employer and for the union. These were costly strikes, and bear in mind, we weren't a big union or a very wealthy union.

Ward: You didn't have a big strike fund?

LG: We didn't have any strike fund.

Ward: You did have a policy, did you not, that when a strike took place the officers went off the payroll, right along with the members?

LG: Right - correct. That was automatic in the locals. In the case of the International, it depended on what proportion were out, so that

LG: it did not have uniform application. But as I recall, at the time Longshore and Warehouse were both out in '49, we were really scrounging around for nickels; it was not easy.

Ward: Did you take a financial dumping too?

LG: We weren't getting paid so much to be dumped very far.

Ward: Well, you were cut some anyhow?

LG: Oh, sure - we made heavy contributions to the strike fund; every nickel counted; this was a real draining operation. It also meant, for example, that sometimes the only way that you could even retreat was by fighting - which sounds like a contradiction in terms. There's all the difference in the world between a retreat and a rout and if you can retreat and keep your army intact, there are circumstances that warrant it.

For example, the 1949 Warehouse strike was an expensive strike. The members wound up getting a dime an hour increase in pay. The employers initially offered absolutely zero - just renew the contract as is. Actually, the members were doing quite well in '48, '49 was different; but we had to fight then. We struck Crockett in '49. The Longshore strike in Hawaii wasn't even over yet. We finally picked up a little more than a dime in Crockett; I think 10 cents plus an extra seven cents automatically early in the following year in March, pretty much along the lines of the settlement in Hawaii.

In Hawaii, here was a strike that went six months around the issue of wages, but with a much more fundamental sociological issue behind it. The others, you couldn't say had the same sociological issues; the closest being the Longshore strike in '48 on the west coast. There you had a combination of several factors. Employers were determined to reverse the whole scene in terms of the hiring hall and to use this new-fangled weapon, Taft-Hartley, to kick the union into line.

LG: All this time we had a battle going on in the question of the non-Communist affidavits. There is nothing in the law to this day that says you have to use Taft-Hartley or the National Labor Relations Board. And the Board has become more of a pain in the neck today in terms of trying to get anything done; even the minimal improvements that Carter was committed to went down the drain in Congress.

So, we adhered to this line - it sort of made sense. A number of other leftwing unions did the same thing, but before long the CIO was using Taft-Hartley in order to raid. The Teamsters were using Taft-Hartley in order to raid.

Finally, sometime in 1950, we decided we had no choice but to comply with Taft-Hartley. There was never a question in our minds about the legal elements on compliance - that we could have done at all times. The real hitch was going along with the whole concept. We finally had to comply. It was the only way to defend ourselves.

So, we were both fighting and retreating and having to take certain steps which eventually resulted in pulling in our lines. Simultaneously, in 1949 and 1950, the whole process of expulsion of the leftwing unions from the CIO began. I had thought that Arthur Goldberg played a role in the trial itself; apparently not, from what I have been able to check. I gather he's the one who prepared the material.

Even after the expulsion we had a policy to stay in the CIO. It was a different policy, for example, than that of UE and Farm Equipment, who said, "The hell with the whole thing - it's just a kangaroo court, anyway." We thought the thing to do was to fight as long as we could, to build as many allies as we could, which we did; but still it was a retreating fight. Toward the end of 1950, the State CIO Council, for example, was taken over; Richard T. Leonard and Tim Flynn, I think; he was CIO Director in Los Angeles; Leonard was a CIO administrative officer. They're the ones who moved in with court orders and so forth.

Ward: That was when Merv Rathborne was secretary wasn't it?

LG: No, it was afterwards. Merv appeared as a witness against Harry.

Ward: Oh, that's right - but who was secretary then?

LG: Bjorne Halling was secretary. They took over the CIO councils; I mentioned earlier the International taking over 150 Golden Gate which technically was owned by the San Francisco CIO Council. This must have been 1948 or early in 1949, because we had this feeling that things were going sour. We were down at 604 Montgomery; we had gotten out of 150 Golden Gate - there wasn't enough room; but the CIO Council and some of the tiny unions used the place.

We finally decided we might as well take the building back; most of the money in there was ours; so I recall Dick Lynden was on the CIO Council's board there, so I said to Dick, "Why don't you call a special meeting of the board of directors and vote to sell the building back to the ILWU." There were some screams, but there was some money around and I made out the check and paid them the same day and we took over the building. This was just as well, because otherwise the CIO would have picked it up when they took over the Council.

We had a set-up which amounted to unity committees. Various labor unions in areas like Los Angeles and San Francisco made attempts to maintain all the ties we could, whatever strength we could. We fought against being separated from the rest of the trade union movement and we constantly fought for unity.

We did this even during the Teamster raid in early 1950; by that time Joe Dillon had gone over the hill with a group from Local 6. We called a special convention of Local 6. We invited the Teamsters to come to the convention, so it was both a bold policy as well as being forced to fight a retreating action. The reason we invited them to come to the convention was

LG: again the constant hammering away - the struggle for men's minds, trying to convince them that here was a line that made some sense.

I remember our publicity was very intense in those days. We made a proposition to the Teamsters. We said, "Look, the one thing that won't do any good around here is cannabalism. Basically, it finally works out that the employers are the only guys who have anything to gain from it. They use one union against the other, they divert the attention of the union, they turn people against the union - they do harm and no good.

"We'll invite you to the convention; whatever your reasons are - because they had talked first with the CIO, Tim Flynn - for getting out of the ILWU, you put them out in front of the delegates. The issue will be argued out there and we'll take a referendum vote of the whole Local 6 membership. If they go along with you, everybody goes. If they turn it down, you get out, no jurisdictional raids."

Of course, they just ignored it, but on the other hand, if you look past the immediate individuals and the little petty struggles for power and address yourself to basic principles, then you can see how an approach of this sort had an awful lot of value. So, there was never any reluctance on our part -

Ward: You're just about calling Eisenhower a Teamster official, because that is what he did in Vietnam - -

LG: That's what he said he would do - -

Ward: Well, he backed away from it.

LG: Yes, he backed away from it; the Teamster officials did an Eisenhower, that's more accurate. In other words, what Eisenhower agreed to in '54 was not too different; that was a bit after us, but that's all right.

LG: But it was a sound program - not too different than the program we took with the CIO. We said, "Look, we've got no objection to being voted down. All we want is a chance to say our piece and let the membership have the last say." That's all it was. That's all we ever asked for in the AFofL. Just a chance to take the deck - no more. If the labor movement is to be anything, it's got to be that sort of a forum for ideas and conflict. Well, those people weren't operating that way and many people don't to this day, so . . . .

All I'm saying is that it was a combination of all these factors at work. Again, bear in mind that everybody was moving into our flanks at the same time. In glancing over The Dispatcher, I happened to start putting down a list of the number of people who zeroed in against us just in Hawaii Longshore alone.

In addition to others already mentioned, there was an outfit that called itself I M U A, which in Hawaiian means "forward." But they used the initials for "I Might Undertake Anything." This was a so-called Hawaii residence group, dominated by haoles. They were out crusading against us; taking out ads and everything else.

Ward: Incidentally - spell the word "haole" for me.

LG: H A O L E; they say the word literally means "white stranger." It's used when they talk about white persons generally. I always thought it also meant a luna. I was corrected once by a Hawaiian.

I happened to be stuck on the Kona coast - not too far from Kailua. I stayed in some small motel for the night and there was a Hawaiian teacher who owned this place - very friendly and knew a little bit about the union and wanted to talk about it.

I used the word haole and he said, "By the way, do you know the origin, the derivation of the word?" I said, "No, I always thought it meant either a luna, first rank luna or a white

LG: man, generally from the mainland." "Well, he said, I've done some studying on this." Now, I'm not saying that this is authoritative; I'm not terribly sure it's important that it be authoritative. It's much more important to recall these marvelous things that go on in the minds of people when they decide to work on something like this.

He said, "The white haole is a conjunction of two Hawaiian words. The words are hau and ule." Now, I know what ule is in Hawaiian - that's a prick - and hau, according to him, means shove. "When the white seamen got there the first thing they did would be to grab some of these Hawaiian wahines and rush them off into the brush; so we labelled them hauule - haoles." Well, that's just some of the theory; regardless of the facts, it's a good story.

Ward: Well, the story about the derivation of okulehau -

LG: Which was the drink - -

Ward: Bottoms up - -

LG: No, the okole is your ass; it literally meant - oh, okolemaluna, that's what you're thinking of. Maluna is moon - okole is your fanny. We say, "bottoms up," but the words literally mean "ass to the moon."

Ward: Well, the way I heard it was that Captain Cook was getting whatever he could get hold of to distill -

LG: No, taro was what they made it out of -

Ward: Whatever they used - anyway, they had this big kettle and they made the brew in this kettle and that's where the big, black iron bottom came from. That was my version. It's more polite.

LG: Yes, that might be the derivation of the word okulehau, but the expression for bottoms up is literally bottoms up - okolemaluna.

Ward: Well, anyway, you were talking about the IMUA and -

LG: The Citizens Committee. President Truman, Interior Secretary (Julius A.) Krug. And there was also a campaign to support Governor Stainback; Maldonado, the renegade member of Local 10; also the Maritime Democratic Club which was set up in San Francisco, another redbaiting outfit. Maldonado was repudiated by the Maritime Democratic Club and finally expelled by Local 10. Of course, there were injunctions and seizure orders and the advertisements with their "Dear Joe" editorials; the American Legion. The Hawaiian Legislature with their Acts 2 and 3. What a lash-up!

XVII A SWEET REVENGE

(Interview 24: 29 August, 1978)

The Lanai Strike

Ward: Now, Lou, I think you were talking about the Lanai strike.

LG: That would be logical.

Ward: Let's get into the pineapple situation.

LG: In 1947 we took a setback in pineapple. No question that the strike there was somewhat premature. Also, no doubt in my mind that there was a sort of overwhelming intoxication with the season. People are hypnotized by all this fruit that is becoming fresh and has to be canned at one time.

In the pineapple growing season, the crop is geared to the availability of seasonal labor. They used a good many high school - and I guess a few college - kids for the canning operation. Most canneries which would sort of putter along were using what they called intermittent workers. During the peak season they would go up to thousands of employees. In any event, - even though there were some differences later, particularly in Jack Hall's mind, as to whether or not we should have settled when we did - there was a retreat in pineapple in 1947.

LG: In the period that then ensued, through the Hawaii Employers Council I think, the employers worked out their joint strategy. I don't think there was anything sub rosa; they were just representing their own interests. Naturally, you're not too fond of that, particularly if the odds get very bad. But what they were able to do, though, was run broken field through the union. There were a number of pineapple companies, the major one being Hawaiian Pine, which was in turn owned by Castle and Cooke.

Del Monte had a cannery in Hawaii together with certain land that they worked - lease lands, I think, primarily, on Oahu but also on the island of Molokai. Libby McNeil and Libby had a cannery in Hawaii and also worked some lands. There were some smaller canneries on the island of Kauai which I believe are all phased out by now.

During the '47 beef or directly afterwards we lost one of the companies through successful efforts of the employers to take the union apart. Well, the program of the employers was not something to be misunderstood. I think it is one of the inevitable things, depending on the balance of organization. If the union stays strong and the industry is well organized, you're going to find fragmentation among the employers, depending on the exercise of economic strength.

If, on the other hand the union is weak, the employers very quickly take advantage by either moving into those areas where they can disorganize the workers entirely or set the pattern at the weakest link. There's nothing that requires any great, brilliant strategy to figure that one out. So the employers would then follow a policy of imposing a wage settlement.

The contracts had come open once or twice and what the employer did was to just simply announce, "Okay, this is what we're going to pay, we're not going to pay anymore. You can sit and bargain." They were careful. They didn't want charges of refusal to bargain in good faith and things like that.

LG: Even before they made their proposals they had a pretty good idea as to where the weak spots were, so in a number of cases they would start off with the Hawaiian Pineapple Company, the biggest. It was also one which I suppose had the weakness of bigness because the seasonal workers were not part of the union.

Henry White, president of the company, had led the strikebreaking efforts; there were pictures of him and his family out in the field picking pineapples. On that score, I think Jack was right; I would have liked to watch what happened within a week or so of this kind of effort.

Ward: Yes, I can see why.

LG: Well, come the end of 1950 - the pineapple agreement was open, the employers proposed an 8-cent an hour increase and the initial negotiations were with Hawaii Pine. We called in the full committee, even though the employers were dealing company by company, because we felt it was important to keep the union together, and to keep the industry together as best we could within our own ranks.

The general feeling was that we couldn't effectively fight back at that moment and that while people weren't too happy with the offer, it was better to take it and rebuild; the process was going on. The one group of workers who rejected the proposal, also a part of the Hawaiian Pineapple Company, were the workers on the island of Lanai. Lanai also means something like a -

Ward: It's a porch, isn't it?

LG: It's a porch and I guess the reason the island was called Lanai was that it is sort of a porch for the island of Maui; it was just a few miles across the channel there.

Ward: It's not a very large island, is it?

LG: Let's see, there were about 20,000 acres under cultivation.

Ward: Forty-fifty square miles?

LG: That's about all.

Ward: Then it's about as big as the city of San Francisco?

LG: No, no - a little bit bigger. There's a fair section of the island that is not cultivated; some high hills, all wooded and there's still a good deal of game there. During the Lanai strike people were well organized and they managed to get fed. They rejected the contract. Finally, they struck, somewhere around February, 1951.

I recall the beginning of the strike because I was down there; there was a sugar caucus and we were formulating our demands and tidying up some of the other battles. There was also the process of consolidation of the various locals in Hawaii. The pineapple caucus decided they were going to take the employers' offer, the eight cents.

Earlier we not only discussed this with the pineapple workers in Hawaii, who were under the gun, but the other workers as well. The headquarters of the union were in the second floor of an office building; makeshift offices because the union was about to go ahead and build its new headquarters at 451 Atkinson Drive, right across the street. The meeting facilities at the office were not terribly good.

I recall leaving the meeting there and some of the fellows from Lanai, including Pedro de la Cruz, were waiting and said, "We'd like to sit down and talk for a while." So, we were just sitting around there on a bit of lawn and all they wanted to know was, did they have the right to strike at Lanai.

I told them sure they had the right to strike - no question about that; the employers were negotiating company by company and practically plant by plant. And there was nothing in the way of an industry contract that was being jeopardized. I didn't see that they were bound by the industry vote. I told them they had the

Left to right: Jack Hall, Harry Bridges, Louis Goldblatt. In Hawaii, 1950s.

Terry and Louis Goldblatt meeting Eleanor Roosevelt at White House luncheon for people helpful to the war effort, ca. 1943

Photo by Don Faulkner Photography

LG: right to strike, "But before you do, there are a few things that should be understood both by the workers and by the leadership. Number one, when you're striking you'll be not entirely on your own, but damn near."

You see, Lanai had no cannery; they just picked the fruit and shipped it in barges, generally an overnight run to Oahu, where the next morning it hit the canneries. I said that the chances of spreading a picket line - let us say, if the employers managed to work - over to Hawaii Pine are just about zero.

It's not because a lot of good people there wouldn't walk out; I think we'd lose it. We're just in no shape to take on a long beef there; plus there's no question in my mind that the employers are going to stick with this thing for a while, because they think they can fragment industry bargaining.

I said, "That's one thing you ought to understand, to start with. As to whether you'll be completely on your own, that will not be true - you'll have the support of the union. When it comes to finances, we'll help you as best we can; I think you had better set up relief committees from the very start. The other thing, if you have any idea that you are going to win a strike of this sort in two or three months, forget it. It will take a lot longer. These employers like it the way it is, and they are not about to give it up."

They listened very carefully, didn't ask too many questions; when I got through, they went back to the initial question: did they have the right to strike? That's it. Some time in February Lanai went down, and there started an episode that added up all the things that were happening in Hawaii; the divergent currents, both in terms of public and governmental hostility, and also what was going on among the employers.

Ward: You had a replay of redbaiting, newspaper antagonism?

LG: Well, for a while there just was a complete blanket of silence. Later on, the papers began talking about our destroying the pineapple industry, the usual thing. Nobody was too upset about that. As a matter of fact, I think some of the guys felt a bit better when wome of the blasting came along because they figured when the employers got hurt, they screamed. That strike moved along on its own, amazingly well organized . . . .

Ward: There was no production?

LG: No; the only way you could have had production was to bring in strikebreakers.

Ward: And they didn't do that?

LG: No - I think that the chances of their being successful were very, very thin. This whole damn island was just owned by Hawaiian Pine. Everything on it. I think even the post office was leased from the company. In any event, the guys did an effective job. They set up huge soup kitchens, fed entire families there. They had regular hunting parties going up into the hills, getting wild pigs still running around.

There are small deer on Lanai. I don't know if anybody ever bothered with a hunting license. I'm not sure those were necessary. They had gardening crews and they also had fishing parties. Everybody was accounted for and very well disciplined.

Well, one of the things that I couldn't quite figure out was what this strike was all about. I understood exactly how they felt, but they were taking a kicking around.

Ward: What were their demands over the 8 cents?

LG: They demanded more money - 12 cents instead of the 8. They demanded some stronger seniority rights; there were some poor classifications; they had grievances long pending. After the '47 strike, the employers were not making much of an effort to settle a grievance; but I felt those were not reasons enough by themselves.

LG: It was during that same year that Jack Hall was indicted and we had some other headaches. During one of the trips down there, I sat around and asked a lot of questions and finally realized that this was a strike without an obvious strike issue; the issues were somewhere else. On poking around, some of the things emerged and this gives you an idea how deep some of the hostilities went in Hawaii.

In 1946, they had brought in a whole group of Filipinos. Those Filipinos were allocated around to various companies; in the main, field workers. Some went to sugar and some to pineapple; some of them went to Lanai.

We objected to the importation of any additional Filipinos in 1946, not because of any hostility to the Filipinos, but because we felt that because the war was over there would be a certain amount of shift back to the plantations; mechanization was moving on apace and before long these men would not be necessary. All you would have would be a lot of headaches and hardships.

This didn't stop the employers a bit, and through their recruiting machinery they brought these people in. Well, maybe a year or so later, or maybe 1950 for that matter, all of a sudden, Hawaiian Pine, at least on Lanai, decided they didn't need those additional workers. It's a small island, about 3,000 people, maybe 5,000 now, and I guess at that time, close to a thousand were working for Hawaiian Pineapple Company.

These men had all made friends, of course, particularly in the Filipino community. One afternoon they were notified that there was no longer any need for them; they better go back to wherever they're living, - some in single men's barracks, some in houses which had been converted for single men - and get their things. And that same night they started to ship them out.

Ward: Where did they ship them to?

LG: I guess back to Honolulu and from there back to the Philippines. It might have been in 1949 because many of those workers had been brought

LG: in under 3-year contract. When the three years were up, the employers were not going to renew them; okay, off they go. Maybe some of them were just dropped in Honolulu and told "Do the best you can."

The thing that really burned the workers on Lanai was the inhumanity of the company; the business of notifying a guy who's made his transition, been there several years, notifying him in the afternoon to go home, get his things and get out. As they put it, "Not even time to have a little bit of a luau; not even time to have a small party so that the guys could say goodbye." This really burned them and the resentment must have been very, very deep. My hunch is that before these guys left all they asked of their friends was "just get even, just get even."

That was one of the things. So, I thought there must be some others. I kept poking around and discovered there was another deep-seated grievance - the way the houses were laid out. The workers lived down on what was almost flat country; part of the island is fairly flat. Part of it is slightly hilly, then there are a couple of slightly higher hills on the island, around Lanai City.

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Ward: You just mentioned that the supervisors lived on top of the hills.

LG: Right. The few roads on top of the hill where the supervisors lived were paved. The roads down around the camps were dust. Most of Hawaiian land is volcanic land, has a fine, red dust, and the guys were telling me - they were primarily Japanese because these were family men . . .

Ward: And the Filipinos were pretty well gone by that time?

LG: No, no; these were just part of these old pending grievances. As a matter of fact, the majority of the workers on that plantation were Filipinos.

LG: The story that came out from some of the others we were talking about was that it was not too uncommon where a housewife would get up in the morning, do the washing, hang it all out. Bear in mind again, these were all dirt roads there. Before long a truck would be going by and all this stuff had to be washed a second time. When it came to the supervisor on top of the hill, they had no such problem. Their wash would be nice and clean - no dust around or anything. So, there were these resentments around in addition . . .

Ward: Were there any more like that, aside from the dust and revenge?

LG: The feeling, for example, particularly from 1947 when it came to trying to settle any kind of grievance; it was a question of the attitude of the employers when they met . . .

Ward: You mean the attitude of the employers when they met the employees?

LG: Yes, arrogance, brushing them off; that was what it amounted to. So it was a combination of these things and these guys were just determined to hang on.

Well, it was somewhere in the midst of that strike where they set up a sort of a two-bit Hawaiian un-American Activities Committee; everybody was in the act by that time. California had one and most of the states had one, all aping the House un-American Activities Committee; which was also going on, too. You had all the so-called reluctant witnesses I mentioned to you in 1949. They were cited for contempt by the House.

That was the period when even if you took the Fifth Amendment, you were cited for contempt. The first two cases went before Judge Metzger; one of them was Yukio Abe, a longshoreman, a good guy. In both cases, Metzger dismissed the charges on the grounds that taking the Fifth Amendment did not constitute a contempt of Congress. This became a very important point.

LG: Anyway, these things were going on too. A man whose name was (Ronald B.) Jamieson, an attorney or a judge, was with their un-American Activities Committee, the local one, as a so-called conciliator. He got in touch with me and said he wanted to talk about the Lanai strike. Well, we sat down and had coffee. He said, "What's the strike all about?"

I said, "I don't know; if you ask me what the specific strike issues are, I know what they are and they are written down. If you want a copy I'll send it to you. But that's not the problem." He said, "Well, what is the problem?" I said, "The toughest strike in the world to settle is a strike without a strike issue. And the real issues here are not in the written demands. The real issues here are all in the backlog of grievances that have piled up over the years." And I mentioned a couple of them to him.

He says, "Well, settle the thing." I said "I have no idea; right now I'm sure that if you had a meeting of those workers and said, 'How about a deal? We'll sink the island; will that settle the strike?', they'll vote 'yes'."

Next thing I know, not too long thereafter, this guy testifies that he met with me and I told him that the program in the Lanai strike was to sink the island. That's how seriously they took all this stuff. All he could see in his head were these crazy visions of a union embarked on a program to destroy Hawaii, period. To even sink the island; that ends it, right?

Ward: How far along in the strike was this? How many weeks or months?

LG: Oh, I guess three or four months. That strike lasted a long time - over seven months, close to eight. One of the longest strikes I've ever been into. No, no, I was mixed up in a strike that went nine months later - that was over at Colgate. But this was the longest one we ever

LG: had down there, longer than the longshore strike, 178 days. So, it just gives you an idea of how people thought. This guy, I don't think he had all of his marbles anyway. I think he wound up later on over in Kaneohe - that's the place . .

Ward: You mean Jamieson?

LG: Yes, that's the place for the mentally ill, mentally disturbed. So, that gives an idea of what the reaction was, but this thing just dragged along.

Ward: Who were the attorneys in the Hawaii Seven; Jack Hall's particularly?

LG: Dick (Richard) Gladstein -

Ward: Dick Gladstein?

LG: Yes, and Harriet Bouslog, Meyer Symonds and Al Wirin. Gladstein came down there. As a matter of fact, Harriet was worked over by the courts there because she made a speech somewhere about the whole nature of the Smith Act trial and what was going on.

Ward: She was not allowed to speak?

LG: I mean, after all when you are talking about the Smith Act, you're talking about something that's completely contrived - nothing makes any sense. If the indictment made sense, then I suppose everything else would make sense.

We finally got a fairly good agreement in sugar, notwithstanding Jack's indictment. I recall that the word went out by Jack's office and the various locals - just in the process of merging into Local 142 to have them take things like food, staples and so forth and so on which many of them had accumulated in preparation for a strike and send that to Lanai, which they did. So that food kept coming in, money kept coming in - not big money, but enough to get by.

LG: The company meanwhile filed action in court and tried to collect all the rents from the guys. We told them not to pay rent until the strike was over. So, the company exerted some additional pressure. The company decided to sit this one out and they wrote off a full pineapple crop, something pretty close to twenty five million dollars worth, which in those days was a fair amount of money. When you look at it in terms of the number of workers involved . .

Ward: What did they save in terms of wages?

LG: You're talking about say, a thousand workers; say they were making an average of four bucks an hour - you're talking about 32,000 bucks a day, I guess. That would be about $160,000 a week. Oh well, the amount was substantial, but that's not the way an employer measures things. It's not how much you've lost in wages, it's how much you've lost in profits. He's not in business to pay wages, he's in business to make a buck.

Toward the tail end of the strike, I got a call from Jim Blaisdell who wanted to sit down with Jack and myself. "Something has to be done about this Lanai thing."

Ward: He'd not been active in it before?

LG: Yes, it was a quiet period by the Employers Council. In other words, no real attempt to move; the logical explanation was that the employers had made a decision to sit this one out. I'd say that they looked at it as a straight out-and-out investment - that they would get the returns from this later on.

Blaisdell wanted to sit down with Jack and myself and we said that was okay. Jim suggested that we have lunch over at the Tropics (restaurant) out at Waikiki. We sat around - we had a few drinks and had lunch. Jim liked to drink, Jack didn't mind, and it didn't bother me too much. I don't think it was until late that afternoon, must have been around three, four o'clock. We had been there a long time.

LG: A lot of these discussions are general bullshit, you know, feeling out and probing and so forth. And we found no good reason to open up the question; it was a question of just waiting. Finally, Jim was very direct - by that time we had covered some of the imponderables about strike issues. I had told him about my conversation with Jamieson- whether that was in the press, I don't know. I had said to Jim, "It's still true - you want to make a deal with the guys to sink the island, they will all vote yes."

So, Jim said, "Let's forget that; we want to settle." I said, "I'll write it out." And I had an envelope in my back pocket - I don't carry a notebook. I sat down and wrote the things out and said, "Here's what they are. You say eight cents; that will not do. We need more than that, and 12 cents is not sufficient either. It'll have to be 15 cents - that's only the first condition. Second, the industry has to go back into industry bargaining. The 15 cents has to go to all of the workers. The 8 cents is already in effect, so 7 cents has to go into effect for everybody on top of the eight. That means that on Lanai they would get the 8 cents back to the time of the expiration of the contract in October of the previous year." This must have been, oh, the strike had been maybe six months along at the time -

Ward: From August - September? Somewhere in there?

LG: It would have been to the end of September the year before; there would be a pre-period of retroactivity up until the strike began. All pineapple workers would get the additional seven cents. The industry would go back and bargain because we had to straighten out problems of seniority and classifications that ought to be settled locally; also something ought to be done about this whole attitude on grievances by the supervisors, and so forth and so on.

"Well," he said, "have you got them all down?" I said, "Yep." As we left the Tropics, Jack turned to me and said, "Well, I know you had a

LG: fair amount to drink," and I said, "I had a lot to drink," and he said, "That thing will never fly." "I'm not sure about that," I replied. "What the hell, the strike is this far along with every indication that the guys are not going to crack; they'll just hang in there, that's all. Right now, at least they're eating regularly and we'll see what happens."

So, two or three days later - this must have been the seventh month of the strike - we get a call from Blaisdell asking if we both could meet over at his house. It was a Sunday; he said he wanted us to meet with the industry.

I said, "Sure, we'll be there, but you have the terms ready that I think we can handle. Frankly I know of no way of handling a strike settlement with the Lanai guys alone. It's an issue that has to go somewhat beyond them - where they feel they have accomplished something beyond the specific economic demands. The only big thing I can think of is the resumption of industry bargaining " - which is about as cold a way as any of saying okay, we've got to make up for the damage done in the '47 beef.

He said, "Well, I think it's going to sit all right." So, I told him we'd be there. Jack and I went over to his house; he was living in this house just past Diamond Head, very attractive section. I told you about Jim's beefing that his house was on the Bishop estate. And Jim had the industry people there.

I remember this guy, Vern Haas, he was there from Libby; Jack Driver, a guy I got to know quite well was there from CalPack. Henry White was there; he'd be the first one we were looking for, the head of Hawaiian Pine. Jim was determined that there would be as little conversation as possible - it was going to be a social afternoon. They had brought along an assistant, so it was a good sized crowd -

Ward: Just the two of you and a half a dozen of them, huh?

LG: Jim and his wife, Barbara, a few more than a dozen; I'd say eighteen or twenty. Jim took out a bottle of gin; I'll never forget this. He figured that making mixed drinks was a waste of time, so he had the glasses all lined up, filled up the . . .

Ward: So that everybody would help themselves?

LG: No. Jim fixed the drinks and lined them up, and left the room. Before long, it was a very cheerful thing. Obviously, the employers were very happy. I think they decided, "Okay, it's worth a try but at some point you have to call it a day." It was clear that the agreement was okay, no problem there.

Jim had a motorcycle and he was roaring around every once in a while; Jim was pretty wild when he got gassed and he had a large garden and he'd take his motorcycle and roll clear around this garden. He wouldn't go out on the street. And he had a pellet gun and he was out on the beach shooting at tin cans and stuff of that sort. It got to be that kind of an afternoon.

When I've had a few drinks I decide I can still play the piano, and I was playing more in those days. I was playing the piano for a while and I recall Henry White coming over and saying, "You know, if I could play the piano, none of this stuff would be very important." I just looked at him. No matter how much you've had to drink, you know when you're getting your leg pulled. Apparently, he had been a supporter of the Hawaiian Symphony for a long, long time. Anyway, that was one of those silly things.

Somehow some of them finally wound up in a poker game. I sat in for a little while; Jack was playing; he's a good poker player. He had that amazing technique, you know, which I'm sure he developed over the years. Jack's sight was not too good, or appeared to be not too good. He never drove a car, partially because of his sight.

LG: They were playing something like stud poker and he wanted to think through and he'd say, "I want to take a look at those things," and he'd start peering down at each hand, obviously calculating just what the odds were; the cards were in his head before he would make his bets.

Well, I got out because I wasn't getting any place. Jack wound up with all kinds of money; he was calling everybody and collecting all kinds of bets. He was good. He always wore these aloha shirts with pockets on them, two up here and two down below and he was putting money in the various pockets.

Finally we broke the thing up. Jim wanted to know what we were going to do. And I said, "Well, I'll be in touch with Lanai; I'll be going over there in the next day or so." He said, "Oh, I hope the hell it sticks." I said, "Well, we'll see."

I remember driving Jack home from there. He didn't live all that far away, up in the hills. Even though he started putting all that money he had won on the table, Yoshiko was not impressed. He was just late for dinner. I took off in a hurry.

It was a couple of days later - I had called Pedro de la Cruz, who was the leader there, asking him to get the committee together, and I went over. The guys met me at the airport and I recall that before we went to the meeting they drove me on along some of the fields there and said, "Just smell." And they were right; the crop was gone, it had all turned to alcohol; you could get drunk just standing there looking at it.

I said, "Gee, that stuff is all around." He said, "Yeah - it's foul." We got together in the committee and I said, "Why don't you bring in all the leaders you can." So, they brought a lot of guys in; sort of small headquarters, right next to the grocery store that Pedro de la Cruz owned. They brought them in and I started going over the settlement and said, "This is a real victory."

LG: For a while, they just sat there, cold, and I said, "Look, something is bothering somebody here; what's it all about?" Finally, one guy got up and said, "I'll tell you what's the matter. You say, we're going to get 15 cents instead of the 12. That's good, but that's not the point. All the other workers gonna get 7 cents on top of the 8 cents, so they get the same 15 cents we get. They didn't fight!" (laughter)

They knew the facts, they understood the score, they realized before they struck that they would be on their own. That was okay. But the idea that somebody else was going to get something without fighting, they found so hard to handle. So, we spent a good deal of time discussing industry bargaining and what it means - why the settlement made sense and why it was such a big victory, because it was really a much bigger victory than just winning the contract on Lanai.

Actually if you continued the way they did and nobody else got anything instead of the 15 cents, the next time around the employers will tell a group of workers in another cannery that okay you want more than we're offering you, you take an eight month strike too.

But the real significance here was that the employers decided they'd lost the game; it took a couple of years; now they had to pay for it. The biggest victory was going back into industry bargaining. If somebody was trying to run broken field, he had to be tackled awfully hard by somebody.

Well, the workers finally got it, and said, "We'd like to know your recommendation." I said, "We'll recommend it - can we have a meeting late this afternoon?" "No." I asked, "Why?" "There's a hunting party out - we have to wait until they come home. A group is out fishing; we don't know what time they'll get back; we can't have a meeting until tomorrow or the next day." So, I sat around with Pedro de la Cruz for a while -

Ward: A question: you said Pedro de la Cruz owned this store, yet he was a strike leader; how could . . .

LG: He came out of the plantation; he had this tiny little store there, just his own personal store.

Ward: But was he still a pineapple worker?

LG: He was on leave and he was a union official. He was a very effective fellow. Later became a member of the Legislature.

Ward: So, it took a day or so to get the meeting organized.

LG: Yes, we organized a meeting. So, Pedro and I sat around a bottle of Scotch or something. He decided this warranted a bit of a celebration. He had a few drinks and before long he went sound asleep. Somebody had given me a flower lei when I came there; the usual politeness. Good will. After all, these guys didn't figure I was an outsider, you know; carpet bagger.

I was going to give it to Pedro and a woman came along, and said, "Don't do that. Never do that." And that's how you find out about some of their superstitions. I said, "Okay, we'll hang it up there until he wakes up." "Never hang it on a man who'd sleeping," she said, "because that's the same thing as putting it on a dead man." Interesting. Pick up these little things.

Pedro left a very strong impression on me before he fell asleep that it was just as well that the guys handle a beef on their own, including the meeting. Let them run it but you'll be all right; you have the key fellows.

They had a group there who were just as tough as nails, particularly the Filipinos and the Japanese, guys like Shiro Okama and his brother Goro, very effective leaders; and the Filipinos were a tough, tough group. I'm sure that one thing that would never occur to anybody would be to break ranks. Anyway, I said in that case you guys go ahead with your meeting and I'll go back to Honolulu.

LG: So, I took the last ride out of there - I think there was one just before sunset. I went back and I was at the hotel and I got a phone call around two o'clock in the morning. It was Blaisdell trying to run me down. He said, "What happened at Lanai? Is it settled?" "I don't know, I think it is." "Did you have a meeting?" "Yes," I said, "with the committee, but not the membership. They're meeting tomorrow, maybe." "Why in the hell did you leave?", he says. "Don't worry about it."

By that time, he had a lot at stake. Because I'm sure Jim had told the employers "This is one of the things you bargain for." He knew about the business of picking off places one by one; some advantage to the employers, yes, but it can also be turned around. My hunch is that he told the employers that was the reason for the settlement - "Okay, you decide to go this route."

Interesting, in 1947 when the employers presented their so-called final offer before the strike broke, Steele was the one who presented that; when the settlement came along, it was Blaisdell. I don't know if there's any difference in policy between Steele and Blaisdell, or whether the employers played games with the Employers Council, which is much more likely.

The Employers Council, as far as the employers were concerned, was just a group of guys they hired, period. They followed the employers' orders. I guess when they had one set of orders they said, "Okay, we'll carry this one out. If it doesn't work we'll shift around." It was Blaisdell who carried the ball for settlement. Anyway, the vote finally came along and the contract was accepted.

Back to industry bargaining and it has stayed that way since. How things do change! Presently, for example, - and this began a couple of contracts ago - the man who began to move up in Hawaiian Pine and who had been their chief negotiator for the whole pineapple industry,

LG: and who heads it now is a man named Al Fraga. He's also with the Hawaii Employers Council now. He and Tommy Trask, our new regional director, both worked in Hawaiian Pine at the same time, and the atmosphere is considerably different. I'm not saying they agree on everything, but at least they level with each other.

Ward: The chance of misunderstanding each other is much less than it used to be.

LG: Much less, plus a lot of the game playing was knocked off. The employers still want to get by as cheaply as they can, but the tactics are a little bit different. Anyway that's the way Lanai settled up. It sort of rounded out a lot of the beefs that went through '46 and '49.

Ward: So, there's a space there of about five years to straighten out pineapple.

LG: Yes, about four years.

Oh, Those Early Fifties!

Ward: Okay. What next? What else would you like to get into before we get into your headaches with the various redbaiting committees?

LG: Well, I told you I looked up a couple of things. One was the Goodman trial - that was after the Supreme Court victory on Bridges, Robertson and Schmidt in 1953.

Ward: Oh, yes, this is the civil case -

LG: That went to Paul Goodman in 1955; it went before him on June 20th - that's the one where Telford Taylor came out. The case was concluded on July 22. That was a trial where there were very few interruptions.

Ward: That was July 22, 1955?

LG: That would be July 22nd and he came down with the decision on the 29th -

Ward: You mean a week later?

LG: And that wound up the Bridges case. I did some checking on a couple of other things and just so as to get some things straight, I mentioned that Coos Bay caucus which took place in 1950 after the Korean War broke, and that the Coast Guard screening had come up at that time. That was not correct. There were some rumbles of it, yes, and I mentioned the fact that there was one delegate to the caucus - I think his name was Kelly - who was in touch with Tobin. It was very hard to make secret phone calls from there. The guys know just about everybody.

But screening didn't come in full fledged at that time. That was later on. And then when screening did come along, I took the position that we adopted which did not oppose screening on strictly military cargo, but on commercial ships we took a firm position, including threatening to walk off if there was any attempt to screen our guys. We made it stick, but that's when the decimation began of other unions, where a number of the seamen were knocked off their jobs -

Ward: Marine Cooks?

LG: Right, and some of the guys in the NMU, Marine Firemen. Of course, the whole story about screening is a chapter by itself. Just the insanity that went along with it, including at some point all kinds of people getting into the act; longshoremen denied the pass, like a longshoreman who carried several decorations from World War II and was denied a pass, who said, "I'm not a Communist and have never been to a Communist meeting nor been invited to one."

"Well, aren't there any Communists in the local?" He said, "I don't know, I've never seen their books." And finally, the guy from the Coast Guard says, "Well, you know, if you would be a little bit helpful, you might get yourself invited." That was an offer to turn stoolpigeon if he wanted to get the pass. Oh, they had the guts to write the whole thing up and give it to the union paper.

LG: But that was the atmosphere at the time - we were in the Korean War, and this went on and on and on. Luckily, we held our ranks; in the case of many other unions, the damage was done. Of course, by that time - about 1951 - the raiding was going on full blast.

Ward: Was the ACTU still active or had they given up?

LG: They were still around and, as a matter of fact, Father Rice was still around. He was the ideological leader of the whole thing in the Catholic Church; the one in San Francisco was Father Boss.

As a matter of fact, on the Korean War the caucus was generally pretty bad. While the International still had a position that was anti-war, that we had enough, that Korea could very well be the beginning of World War Three, the caucus itself in effect reiterated the same program as the Democratic party, that this had been an invasion by the Communists and so forth and so on; luckily it didn't go so far as to include screening and everything else.

These things, particularly the Korean thing, came into focus at the 1951 convention, which was held in Hawaii; the first International convention down there. Since then there has been a practice of meeting in Hawaii every ten years. We met there in 1951; we met there in '61 and we met there in 1971.

Ward: Your conventions meet every odd year?

LG: Yes, every odd year - every two years. And I think Canada has become a sort of ten year rotation too. And there's a certain number in San Francisco -

Ward: So, two out of the five conventions in the ten years are either in Hawaii or Canada?

LG: That's right. Anyway, the 1951 convention was extremely important because the Bridges case was still hanging fire; redbaiting was going on apace; we had been expelled from the CIO; you

LG: had your Hall hysteria in Hawaii, including the un-American Activities Committee down there, plus other attacks we had gone through.

They were constantly announcing our demise; there were obituaries about this union written almost every other week. The time of the Coos Bay caucus, there were reporters all over the place; they had never seen so many reporters in Coos Bay, all of them with the single purpose to carry the story when the union repudiated Bridges, who was in the clink; repudiated by our union and we got to be good, respectable CIO people.

When the Korean War broke, other headaches piled up very rapidly; the screening piled up. On top of that you had the Wage Stabilization Board. The War Labor Board had gone out of business after World War II.

With the beginning of the Korean War, they put into effect the Wage Stabilization Board, which had so-called "guide lines" which really applied only to wages. Everything else had no mandatory features of any kind; there was no OPA as such. It's a good deal like the governor asking for a voluntary roll-back on rents. It meant just about as much.

The '51 convention became crucial in the sense that it would be the time to take stock, find out how much of an impact all these things had had on the union, and whether we could really keep going. Holding it in Hawaii was a good thing. The place we had for it, by the way, was I guess the most beautiful convention site anybody could ever have had. Luckily, there's a place down there not too far from Kapiolani Park, alongside, but off towards the ocean.

Ward: It's on Oahu?

LG: On Oahu. It's down a way from Waikiki itself.

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Ward: A beautiful place, you said.

LG: Yes, a place called Queen's Surf; this was a place that had been the home of a very wealthy man. And this must have been turned into a bit of a night club, a very large room, big enough to seat our entire convention.

Ward: You had two hundred people there, didn't you?

LG: Oh, we had close to 500, and they were all seated there. As a matter of fact, Franklin D. Roosevelt stayed at this house once when he was in Hawaii. The man who owned the place at the time installed an elevator to take Roosevelt up to his bedroom in one corner of the house. I remember going over there to look at it and it was that kind of a home.

They weren't doing too well at the time, in 1951. That was before the enormous tourist boom. They were happy to have us and the only arrangement we had was that we have our lunches there. We bought them in advance, which wasn't too bad. We told them we'd make a deal provided they didn't open up the bar until 4:30 or 5:00 at the tail end of the convention. It was a lovely place.

A lot of the guys were just fascinated - guys from the mainland. To the guys in Hawaii this was just a bit of old hat. They would grab a quick bite at lunch, then go out in the sunshine and take a dip in the pool. The headquarters were at a place called the Edgewater Hotel. This was one of the earliest of the so-called highrises, owned by a man named Kelly, an interesting character.

I recall Kelly coming to me after the convention had been in town two or three days and he said, "Gee, aren't you guys having a good time here?" "Why?" "Well, you hardly see them around the hotel; we have some Hawaiian music. What are they all doing?" I said, "Look, I guarantee you that they all are busy; at least

LG: two thirds of them are down at the Kalihi district where pineapple-cannery workers gather; they all have built up their social groups."

Hawaiian guys, they're marvelous; just on their own they must have decided, "Okay, you take him, and I'll take him," and so forth and so on. Of course, they are great hosts and they were really determined to cement the solidarity between Hawaii and the mainland. There had been good cooperation in the strikes. They helped with the longshore strike.

Fighting At The Dalles

LG: I recall for example they went out of their way to be very friendly with the guys from Portland and this had nothing to do with Portland's racial policy. I don't know if they even knew about it; that's not what they thought about. What they thought about instead was that in 1949 during one of the efforts on the part of the employers in Hawaii to move cargo to the west coast, they moved those barges of pineapples up to the Dalles. The Dalles is practically in the Cascades, above Bonneville Dam. There are some locks there . . . .

Ward: Biggest locks I ever saw.

LG: Those are the ones that go beyond the Bonneville Dam - -

Ward: One hundred and thirty five feet in one lift, something like that.

LG: Huge, and the Dalles is really cow country. Well, for a while there that barge was chased all over Puget Sound. I remember the Seattle longshoremen renting a plane to follow it because the word had gone out that nobody was going to touch it. They finally gave up on the Puget Sound and took it up the Columbia River; they decided they wouldn't run the risk of trying to unload it in Portland.

LG: They took the barge beyond Portland up into the Dalles where they decided they could hire some farmers, some cowboys; the usual business of poor farmers in Hawaii, who were going to go broke; plus the whole fruit crop in California, the canned crop you know of mixed fruit - that was all going to go down the drain, too. The pineapple interests in Hawaii had managed to get through some legislation that fruit cocktail had to contain a certain amount of pineapple, and that's why the pineapple barge had been loaded.

But the Portland longshoremen worked up quite a head of steam and said, "Hell, no." There were quite a number of our men went there and there was quite a big beef. Our guys were determined that the barge would not be worked, because we had worked the only ship that had ever gone to The Dalles. And as far as they were concerned, it was their work, as well as the most important thing, that this was strike-breaking.

Also, it gives you an idea of how strong the sentiment was in support of the guys in Hawaii. Anyway, they went up there. One guy found an axe somewhere and thought of cutting the lines on the barge. Luckily, he didn't cut them all. Had he done so, that barge would have drifted down and got stuck in the locks and then we would have been in all kinds of trouble with the Federal government.

As it was, it was still a costly venture; they got some big fines against us as a result of a couple of truck drivers who got in the way; although afterwards our men were pretty damn polite. They told the farmers and others "Just don't screw around, that's all." So, the guys in Hawaii were determined to see that the men from Portland were well taken care of. So, on that score the convention was excellent.

Seven Key Words

LG: There were still other issues, such as the Korean War. There were a couple of resolutions that were extremely important, the most important being a resolution on world peace, which we knew would be the focal point of the debate. The officers' report, which generally goes on the deck about the same time as the resolution on a specific subject; a very specific reference was in there that the Korean War shored up the economy.

In 1949 and 1950, this country had begun to go into a bit of a depression. There was a substantial amount of unemployment; prices were rising all of a sudden because of the Korean War and I think the economic analysis was correct about the Korean War shoring up the economy. There were some seven words that became the focal point of a lot of debate.

Ward: What were the seven words?

LG: That "the Korean War shored up the economy." Some of the guys said we should take those words out and the report would be accepted unanimously.

Again, the Hawaii convention was a lot like the Coos Bay caucus, with the reporters standing around ready to predict our demise. There was one reporter down there from the San Francisco Examiner; he just went on a big drunk, but he wrote the stories just like the Examiner wanted. This became a great laughing stock at the convention.

Anyway, the delegates said, "Nope, those words are not going to come out." It was really a very good high level debate - one of the best I've heard in a convention. Finally, the report was adopted; a few dissenting votes, but practically unanimous.

LG: The balance of the report was in good shape. The resolution on world peace was adopted either unanimously or overwhelmingly. The convention had a good tone to it, all the way through, and in terms of solidifying the union, it accomplished its purpose. The officers ran for reelection; no opposition, either to Harry or Jerry Bulcke, Bob Robertson or myself.

Ward: Without opposition?

LG: You know, under the ILWU constitution running for office at a convention is perhaps the easiest thing in the world. An individual doesn't have to be a delegate to the convention. A person is nominated and goes on the ballot, period.

Ward: Well, can he decline?

LG: He can decline, yes.

Ward: Is there a little bit of back-scratching; nominating so and so, knowing he was going to decline?

LG: No, not that I recall - not at that convention. Notwithstanding the beef we had about the officers' report, the rest of it fell in place and the general atmosphere that came out of the convention was "Sure, we had our differences, but the union is going to stick together."

At the time of the convention or very shortly thereafter we picked up the second installment on the 1949 longshore strike victory. You recall the final settlement in 1949 didn't close the gap entirely, but we did pick up 21 cents in a two step affair -

Ward: You gained six cents on the differential?

LG: Right. Then agreement was reached in Hawaii for an additional 20 cents in 1951, which everybody spoke of with a clear indication of how they felt about the strike, even though it was long and costly. If you win a strike the benefits carry over for a number of contracts. If you lose it, the same thing happens in reverse, as in the case of pineapple. So, the convention accomplished its purpose.

LG: Incidentally, one brief item about The Dalles and the refusal of guys to handle cargo here on the coast. One of the things that did develop during that time had its importance in a cumulative way later on. The employers, as a group, would not go along with Matson; that became evident. Matson would have liked to see the whole coast closed down on the grounds that we were refusing to handle cargo.

Out of that whole '49 beef came different language in the ILWU contract to the effect that in the event an ILWU local - as in Hawaii or Alaska - was on strike - and the same would be true of Canada - the longshoremen under the Pacific Coast longshore agreement would not have to handle cargo destined to be handled by strikebreakers at the other end, or the other way around. They would not have to handle cargo that came into the west coast ports that had been loaded by strikebreakers, say, in Hawaii.

It meant the strengthening of the hand of the longshoremen; as when I mentioned this twenty cents that they got in 1951. Eventually they got parity in wages.

Ward: How many years later, about?

LG: Not too much longer after that, around the mid-1950's. An interesting sidelight; one of our issues in the 1949 longshore strike was arbitration which the employers made the equivalent of fornication, almost anything except arbitration. This is the area in which Wayne Morse stuck his neck out and did a hell of a job.

Later on the issue of arbitration became important as a partially defensive movement that was essential for holding the union together. For example, arbitration became a key issue in the warehouse strike of 1949; the employers were highly resistant. Once we got the concept of parity, we have several longshore contracts where the wage issue, if it couldn't be resolved, was sent back to arbitration.

Remember the time it went to arbitration before Sam Kagel; we didn't get a big increase, six cents, but we automatically got that amount of money as soon as the contract was open in Hawaii.

LG: I was down there on something else when somebody called me - it was one of the members of the Hawaii Senate. They were having a hearing before their labor committee on Acts 2 and 3, adopted in '49, and we had this running fight to get the damn things repealed. Very, very hard to get done though, so he asked if I would come and testify, which I did and I let go a blast against the employers, and the state as well; the whole '49 thing had never gotten out of my craw, anyway.

I said, "You know, for a long time, you fought for statehood around here" - and either they had gotten it or it was pretty close, or something. This all goes back to the question of equal representation; the American Revolution was around the same thing, taxation without representation. Now, this bill came about, in part, because these employers said there would be no arbitration under any circumstances. That was one of the reasons for the strike. The way things have finally worked out, you have a situation here where you have arbitration without representation."

Well, they all wanted to know how that worked, so I went over the longshore contract on the west coast and the fact that we were dovetailed into the Hawaii contract later on and still get the same wage increase automatically. That contract on the west coast provided for arbitration. Arbitration had taken place and that same amount of money was then applied to Hawaii.

I said, "Now, during that arbitration the Hawaii interests couldn't even appear; they were not represented. Of course, Matson was represented. We know that - they are part of the PMA; but the whole pretense down here is that we are not dealing with Matson; we are dealing with various stevedoring companies. They might be alter egos, in many cases. So, now you have arbitration. You finally got it whether you liked it or not and you got it without representation."

You didn't have to say a word. One of the employers, I bumped into him a couple of days later in negotiations, and he said, "That was a low blow." He didn't explain why. I said, "Well, isn't it true?" And he said, "Why not let bygones be bygones?" So, I said, "Fine - let's get rid of Acts 2 and 3."

LG: That's part of an atmosphere you get down there; all part of this hoo mali-mali, as they call it - just plain bullshit. You somehow get along. Sure, you fought earlier and somebody might have sneaked up behind you and put a knife in your back, but what the hell, you're still around. No hard feelings. A great saying down there - no hu-hu - don't get angry. That's after it's all over with! Anyway, longshore finally fell in place.

The reason I mentioned the twenty cents is because in 1949 we had those Wage Stabilization Board guide lines. There was a beef with the Wage Stabilization Board on the effectuation of the agreement. And it came along again in the case of the sugar contract. That was negotiated in 1951.

XVIII A PACE-SETTING PENSION PLAN

One Hundred Bucks A Month

LG: Then it came along full blast in 1951 because Longshore negotiated both a wage increase and the first Longshore pension plan, which was to go into effect in January, 1952. Those pension negotiations are worth spending a minute on. Pensions had become an issue in the trade union movement. You recall the Mine Workers' $100 a month pension?

Ward: Yes.

LG: The Steelworkers had picked up a hundred-dollar a month pension which included Social Security.

Ward: Which included . . . .?

LG: At that time, yes. In other words, the pension an individual got for a certain number of years . . . .

Ward: Social Security plus enough from the union to make up that $100 a month!

LG: Anyway, when our pensions were on deck, there was a continuous barrage by the ILWU against the CIO and the A F of L for their going along with the Wage Stabilization Board. In fact, there was one wage opening that the Steelworkers passed up, and we didn't pass up any opportunity to go after Phil Murray and some of the leadership back there.

They had tried to do us in and there was no love lost. That was not the case, by the way, on a local basis. Locally some CIO charters had been lifted

LG: and locals reorganized without the leftwing groups; we still had labor alliances with them. We still tried to hold together whatever we could in the way of friends.

When we negotiated the pension plan our attitude was that under no circumstances were we going to integrate the thing with Social Security, and secondly, that the pension had to be a hundred dollars a month. Well, we got into a rather interesting set of negotiations.

Linc (Lincoln) Fairley was our research director, a very, very competent guy. He and I spent a good deal of time together talking about pensions - not that I knew a great deal about it. I figured that we would have to work out something different, because the kind of money we thought was around for pensions was about 15 cents an hour. If you started putting into effect a fully funded pension, 15 cents would never cover $100 a month.

By that time the employers also wanted to see a pension, in the main because things had improved on the waterfront, where the men were pretty well protected. The attitude of the union was simple; if we couldn't get $100 a month, then we were going to retire on the job.

If necessary, some of the guys would be assigned to make sure that the old timers would be able to get down there inside the gate and report for work. This alternative was not too promising for the employers, plus you had the atmosphere and discipline where it could have been done; there's a great deal of loyalty to the old timers who had gone through the '34 strike. After all, they had also gone through the '48 strike, and we were not about to abandon them.

It was pretty apparent across the table. Vic Pearson was representing the employers. The old Waterfront Employers Association was dissolved by 1951. There was the new Pacific Maritime Association. Henry Clark was head of the thing for a while; then it was split into an on-shore group longshoremen, and off-shore group seamen. Clark went with the off-shore group and Vic Pearson became the head of the on-shore group.

LG: As I said earlier, he was a rather pleasant guy. He was one of those who testified as a character witness for Harry, together with a couple of others who represented the shipowners, Ken Finessy and Hubert Brown. Vic Pearson indicated that 15 cents was around and if "you can buy what you want for the 15 cents, go ahead."

So, Linc and I devised a new kind of pension plan which caused consternation down around Montgomery Street, with the insurance companies and the banks and so forth. I had started doing a lot of reading about insurance companies and pensions. One of the things I was learning about insurance companies was that they are one of the prime sources of capital for the big corporations.

Insurance companies have certain advantages for the large corporations; that's one of the reasons the boards of directors of the big insurance companies are all made up of the heads of various corporations. The reason the insurance companies have an advantage over a bank is that the bank has a demand on it for solvency, immediacy; a certain amount of funds has to be available for immediate reserves.

In the case of the insurance companies, - let's say it's a life insurance policy - the only way to collect on that, your family might, but only after you kick off. In the case of a pension, the only way to collect your annuity or pension - they used to call them annuities - was when you reached a certain age.

I also found out they had two different annuity tables. If you go in to buy life insurance, they use one annuity table. That annuity table in effect says "You're a bad risk. I don't know how you're still staggering around. Okay, we'll still let you buy the life insurance." But it's predicated on your living only a certain length of time, and the premium is also padded to make sure the insurance company is protected.

If you go to the same insurance company the next week to buy another annuity, then you're going to outlive all of these charts; you're the perfect physical specimen. Once you start collecting an annuity, you won't live the ordinary 13 or 14 years, you'll probably live twenty, so it's a different annuity table predicated on how long you can collect the annuity.

LG: The net result of that is that the insurance companies become the holders of all this capital; a natural place for a big corporation to go if they're floating a bond issue. They want money and they want long term. The people on the street, when they found out about this plan . . .

Ward: What was the plan, specifically?

LG: The plan was very simple, really. We said there isn't enough money to fund the pension. What you mean by funding is this: you have to have enough money coming in to pay the benefits as they come due and in addition to start funding what is called the past service liability.

At the time a pension plan is put into effect, you have men with varying ranges of service, some with ten, some with fifteen, some with twenty years of service - that's past service liability. You have a certain pension due to them for those years of service. Then you also have the men who might be under the gun.

Of course, one of the things the unions have to struggle for if you want to get a decent pension - even the one the Steelworkers negotiated, which we consider to be pretty bad - just because a guy was 63 or 64 or 65, you wanted him to get a pension. Sure. In that case you distributed the load to the younger guy; he just started work and he'll have to wait a long time. So, you in effect have a combination of both these liabilities, right?

Let us say that the current service is ten dollars for each year of service; the current service would then be whatever it costs to pay for that $10 a year of service. But since he is not ready for it, the amount will be less because, depending on his age, that money is going to be banked for a certain length of time, providing enough money to pay the man who just retired and the ones who will retire. So, most funds are, or they used to be, fully funded.

The whole idea of the plan was that, say, a plan was funded over a span of 20 years. At the end of 20 years, from that point on, the employer only had to pay for current service because all the past service had been funded. And that is called a fully funded

LG: plan, the attractive feature of it being that the money is all there; the unattractive feature being that you can't pay adequate benefits to people who are under the gun. There is literally no need to fully fund a plan, although this has become essential now under a new law covering employees' retirement security.

The plan that Linc and I finally dreamed up was: "Okay, we're going to have a different kind of pension plan - it's a ten year plan; it would be in effect from 1952 to 1962. Under this plan a man with 25 years service would get $100 bucks - 25 years service at age 65 or over." There would be enough there to pay him 100 bucks; that's all the money we would negotiate and the 15 cents would cover that.

Then the question comes along; what would you have around at the end of the ten years? The answer is, absolutely nothing. We're flat broke. A guy who had read the usual stuff about annuities would say, "What the hell happens to me? I'm only 55." We said, "There's only one choice you have. Stick around and build a strong union; then you'll be tough enough to go get another pension plan and a better one too. The most important thing is to keep a tight grip on the handle of that pump - that's what counts."

They brought in actuaries who said, "We've never heard of a thing like this; the whole thing is financially unsound; we're not positive the government would okay it," and so forth and so on. They were just reflecting the same thing as the insurance companies. All their training is that way and that's the way they think. I recall one man on the employer negotiating committee - Titchner that was the name. A rather nice guy -

Ward: Titchner?

LG: I'm quite sure that's his name. Well, I was describing some of these annuities and why I thought they were phonies. The way things had been going particularly with inflation, you're putting in good dollars and when you get back at the end of ten years, they're bad dollars. He said, "Gosh, how do you know what kind of a plan I have?" He was one of these unfortunates who had been buying annuities all of his life.

LG: He would have been better off doing anything else with that money; anything but a pension because in buying a pension all of his life, I guess 20 or 25 years, when it came due didn't amount to anything.

Ward: Right.

LG: Anyway, they finally agreed. They said, "Okay, if you think it will work, fine." We put that plan into effect and it was really very revolutionary. You can see why the banks, the insurance companies particularly, would have themselves a hemorrhage. They had fits about this thing. There were all kinds of debates about it.

I recall inviting anybody who wanted to argue pensions - great - you're welcome. I got some of these ideas reading some material written by Victor Perlo, as I recall.

Ward: Oh, really?

LG: Yes, of all people, because he had had something somewhere on the nature of insurance companies under the capitalist economy. From that I began to work backwards and realized that actually the only way to avoid the inflation problem was something as close as you could get to "pay as you go".

I recall some discussions later on where some guy said, "Look, this is how much money is going to be in the fund, based on general man hours. Okay, and this is what you think the liability will be. Right. But let me ask a question - what happens if the pension plan runs out - the ten years run out? You have enough money to take care of everybody and that can be banked and there's still dough left over? In that case you can have a big discussion and play 'last man out.' And if there's one man around and the residue is still left, he gets the whole damn thing."

I said, "After all, there's only one way you can beat the system when you retire and that's by outliving it. There's no other way. I mean, you're all through working and you can't lick the employer on the job, so your job as a pensioner is to just outlive the system."

LG: Those were rather humorous discussions - lots of fun - and our members not only accepted it, they thought it was great. I guess it was in 1952 when we had the first flock of pensioners, and I mean we had a flock of them. We had dinners for them; they were lovely affairs. The old timers, real veterans of the waterfront; we had them up and down the coast. I think something like 1200 pensioners at the first crack.

Ward: That many?

LG: An enormous number - enough money was there - we had it figured. Also our guys did a fantastic job of taking care of the retired men; they went to fellows who were in the hospital, hadn't been able to work for four or five years because of job-related injuries or job-related sickness, and managed to get them on the pension list on the grounds they had put in the eligible years. They scoured the coast to take care of every guy who was eligible. That was the opening of the whole pension thing, and must have been in the 1951 negotiations.

But back to the Wage Stabilization Board. Believe it or not, that Wage Stabilization Board would not immediately okay our pension. The wages that were negotiated were no problem because they were under the so-called guide lines.

The Stabilization Board had gotten to the point where they were always cutting the baby in half; that was their way of proving they did a job, even though the guy who was in charge of the thing, Nat Feinsinger, was an old friend of the union in many ways. He had been down in Hawaii in 1946 after Stan White was given the heave-ho. He was the one who brought Clark Kerr in there as an arbitrator. We sent a whole delegation of old-timers back there from up and down the coast.

Ward: Back to Washington?

LG: Right - back to Washington. Harry went with them, and L. B. Thomas. They made the rounds of Washington, had a long session with the Wage Stabilization Board and built up a head of steam where the guys finally just put it to them: "Either this thing is

LG: approved, or the coast is going down and under no circumstances do you cut this baby in half and start chopping it up so we have to put it back together again."

Finally the thing was approved; for that time, it was a very big pension - $100 a month. In that same period, I think the Auto Workers got a slightly better pension than the Steelworkers - $125; but again it was integrated into Social Security. That was the fad of the times. It's understandable; it's about the only way some of the unions could break through. It was a big thing. Later in 1951, we got into pension negotiations in Hawaii, and that is a sort of a chapter of its own.

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(Interview 25: 5 September, 1978) ##

Death of Gene Paton

Ward: You were saying you wanted to discuss happenings in Warehouse in 1952 and '53.

LG: Let me give you some of the highlights of what developed. Gene Paton died in 1951, oh, I'd say of a combination of many things. He had won a battlefield commission as Captain. Paton showed enormous courage during the war. When Pat got back he really got into the swim of things. I mentioned the drive we had for a voluntary wage increase in warehouse after OPA had been knocked out; and how that was worked out. Pat was re-elected president of Local 6. One year he didn't serve - 1949, I think; he'd been pretty ill and took some time off, but his attitude towards his illness and his drinking was one of brushing it off.

Anyway, Pat came back again as president; I guess it was in the 1949 election, in the fall of the year. But a lot of these things began to crawl up his back. It was a combination of fatigue and reaction to the war.

LG: I recall a letter he wrote during the war saying that the world had better be a better place after the war; an awful lot of guys were being lost and they felt it was in some good cause, and it better be a good cause. Well, it didn't turn out that way; with the advent of the Cold War and some of the other things, Pat's reaction was the same as others.

Ward: You seem to be saying that he felt the war efforts of his comrades had been in vain.

LG: No question about that. He would never talk about what went on during the war. He was not like some of these vets who tell you about every single battlefield experience; never talked about it at all. The only part of the chapter that was of interest to him was its conclusion: that it better be a better world.

During the Teamster raid Pat stood up very well. He was an effective leader, including succeeding in getting some key places like Walkup Warehouse back into Local 6. He handled himself very well; the membership liked him, but '51, I guess, things sort of crawled up his back. Finally, just took the way out of going off the bridge.

This was just before the convention in Hawaii, because during that convention we sat around with some of the guys from Local 6, including Chili Duarte. Chili decided he would run for office. Naturally, I supported him, and I think everybody else did, too. Chili was elected. Chili was an extremely hard worker and also had a good touch with the membership. Not exactly the same as Pat's, but . . .

Ward: He was <u>simpatico</u>.

LG: Yes, he was <u>simpatico</u>; he was a great mixer. He was always on the job. He had some advantages over Pat. Chili might be out bouncing around with some of his pals in North Beach or West Oakland or with Billy Lufrano, but it made no difference what time he wound up at night, 6:00 or 6:30 in the morning, he was there on the job, as was Billy. Billy was the dispatcher and he had to be down there at six. He always made it somehow; in what shape I'm not sure, but he would always make it down there. And Chili did a good job.

Reason Instead of Force

LG: But times were rough; following the 1949 strike, we had the problem of both a fighting program and a holding action in Local 6. The fact that we had the master contract had some value. The employers were not about to wash that all out because there was still the ghost of what happened if they went industry-by-industry or house-by-house; they could be picked off.

I recall an agreement around 1950 or '51. Actually, the wage increase we got was very nominal - three and a half cents, plus some other benefits, yet it was one of the best agreements we ever signed in the sense of maintaining the union and continuing a fighting program, with the membership understanding why it was being done. It sat extremely well and the union held together.

In the case of warehouse, our drive for health and welfare became an element of importance around the middle of 1951; then pensions, which had begun to become an issue. That was deferred for about a year. We finally got through those things and the contract began to be fleshed out with those provisions.

There was an interesting aspect to this from the employer. The man who had taken over as the executive officer of the Distributors Association was also an attorney.

Ward: What was his name?

LG: J. Hart Clinton.

Ward: I remember that name.

LG: Yes. I got to know him, and while we didn't see eye to eye on a lot of things and we'd get into periodic clashes, he had an interesting kind of integrity. He was Irish in background and a Catholic; somewhere along the line he had picked up a terrific hatred for turncoats; he had absolutely no use for these guys who had gone over the hill.

LG: As to whether he wanted the ILWU around, that had nothing to do with it. I guess, as far as he was concerned, if there was no union the employers perhaps would be better off. On the other hand, when it came to these guys like Gallo and Pedrin, he felt that if they double-crossed their own guys, they would double-cross everybody else. By the way, he turned out to be 100 per cent right, because later on they got to be a complete pain in the ass, even to the Teamsters.

Some years later times had changed and we were working with the Teamster warehousemen; I got to know people like Einar Mohn. There were indications they they wanted to give us back some of the people in Local 12 and I remember the crack we used all the time, "Look, we're not Indian givers." And the attitude of the guys, a lot of them, was "good riddance." Clinton's attitude in that regard was good.

When it came to the business of protecting the master contract the employers found they would have to support the ILWU position: namely, that the master contract was a single bargaining unit, because the Teamster petitions, or attempts to raid, included filing separate petitions wherever they could, so they could nick off a plant here and a plant there. In a couple of the big plants we defeated them anyway.

Then when it came to the main body, the NLRB finally took the position that the petitions would have to apply to the entire bargaining unit. If there was going to be an election - and we said that would be fine, but it would have to cover the entire group - the Teamster answer was "no dice."

If there had been such an election, I think we would have taken the same position that I had taken in 1948 in Hilo during that whole period of internal dispute around sugar where we had insisted on a referendum vote; if the majority had voted to leave, we'd tell the minority to go with them.

So, this was not without its value and I'd say that our general approach in terms of the membership, the

LG: balance of the labor movement, and direct appeals to the Teamsters - we'd be constantly putting out leaflets and talking to them - kept on-the-job relationships just as strong, or were strengthened because the guys were doubly active.

It was during that same period of time that arbitration became a sort of offensive-defensive weapon which proved that when you are under attack, you're not going to give up the fight. It's also terribly important that you have a solution for that fight; this has such deep appeal that you not only hold your own people together, you begin to pick up allies; even including, well, perhaps not allies, but individuals among the employers who figure: "The union is not taking this insane position that people are attributing to it . . ."

Ward: Reasonable.

LG: Yes. All this pounding away at arbitration began to undercut the employer opposition; how long can you keep this hysteria going when the other guy is saying, "Will you please stop the shouting; if we can't reach agreement across the table, there must be a third party somewhere in the country - you'll find either a law professor or politician or a priest, or what have you - to sit down and say, 'Here's a reasonable solution,'" which is what arbitration really amounts to; when it is binding it has more force than that.

We weren't about to give up, we stayed on the attack, we didn't surrender, we didn't start running. I think this was terribly important; we kept winning victories, because in Longshore we kept picking things up; in Warehouse we made it; in Hawaii, we got over the hump. When it came to its fundamental objective, namely, what the unions could do to better the lives of the people it represented, as well as to maintain an internal democratic structure which was distinctive, these made up the mortar that held the union together.

Ward: Okay, now, Gene Paton is gone. Chili Duarte is president - what happened in '52?

LG: I mentioned pension negotiations in Hawaii. Those negotiations went on for an awful long time. We picked up pensions in San Francisco for west coast Longshore; the day the pensions went into effect, it became a very big thing with all kinds of thank-you parties, acknowledgments. The reaction of the guys on the front was pretty well overwhelming. When the union was formed, the average longshoreman just didn't concede that things like pensions were possible, because longshoring was basically casual.

Ward: It had been, traditionally, and even the union itself indicated, casual . . . .

LG: That's right: "Men along the shore." During the war I could have picked up all kinds of bets - you don't want to go around taking money from the members - I'd get nothing but the most - oh! - endless skepticism and hee-haws when I mentioned that because I had been on the War Labor Board and I had gone through some of the battles - I said, "We're going to pick up vacations" - well, the whole idea seemed preposterous.

Well, we did it - we got vacations. They have become as permanent part of the contract as anything else. When you start talking about health and welfare, we finally got over the hump on that. The membership was a bit more used to the idea that these things could be done; and the breakthrough took place on pensions.

Ward: And Hawaii?

LG: Then in Hawaii, we ran into an odd problem. I think I mentioned to you the fact that each of the five factors was also an agent for an insurance company. Those are chief agents. The rest of the people are sort of sub-agents or salesmen. During the 1949 longshore strike sugar got piled up until hell wouldn't have it; they were even storing it outdoors and providing a picnic for the rats.

I found out later that the employers managed to get through the financial situation during that period by some very large loans from the insurance companies. The loan from Prudential was something like $40,000,000; at least that's the information

LG: I picked up. Jack was very thorough about these things; that's where Jack was absolutely fantastic. He was a real bird-dog for information.

Bob McElrath, who later became regional director when Jack left the Islands to come up here, would have made a perfect gumshoer. This guy loved to move around town; knew just about every newspaperman; got to be very active later on helping out the newspaper unions in joint negotiations down there with the various papers. Had some joint strikes - successful. Bob could ferret out all kinds of information. I don't think anybody in Hawaii could have kept a secret; if Bob was looking for it, he'd find it.

Ward: Well, there was a small town atmosphere in Hawaii also.

LG: That's right. When it comes to some circles, it's still a small-town thing; if an outfit like American Airlines opens up a big hotel, or a Sheraton interest, those things operate in a financial world of their own, whereas your Hawaii internal economy is different. Of course, in that period, particularly, it was pretty well rotated around sugar, pineapple, longshore and the Big Five.

Ward: Well, now, this business of the $40,000,000 loan and the relationship of the factors to the insurance companies; how did that affect your pension negotiations?

LG: It affected them in this way; the employers were determined to have an insured plan. That's one way that you pay off an obligation. They probably also had this thinking in their heads that insured plans fully funded, formed an old traditional concept of how pensions are handled. And I suppose in periods of relatively stable economy this had been the traditional way employers would handle their pensions; of course, where they had a company pension. It wasn't going to be a self-administered thing.

When you go back one step and see the interlocking between these big corporations and the insurance companies, the whole thing becomes part of one cabal. We had had some sessions with the

LG: employers and had gotten nowhere. We recessed then, with the employers suggesting they would bring some experts down there - actuaries - which they did. They were primarily people from Prudential; their chief was named (Henry) Melinkoff. I got to know him quite well after a while.

Ward: Any relation to H.P.?

LG: No, I don't think he spelled the name that way. That was Henry Melnikow. This man was Melinkoff. He was headquartered back in New Jersey at the time. A guy with an inventive mind - he's the one who dreamed up what is called variable annuities. No need to go into that.

I discussed with Linc Fairley, who had worked very closely with me on longshore pensions, what we would do about this. We decided there was no purpose in bringing an expert down. I spent about a week, ten days, with Virginia Woods -

Ward: Who was an actuary in fact, if not in title, at the time.

LG: Mathematics was her field. I asked Virginia if she would explain actuarial tables to me and how they were put together. She quickly got some additional information and I spent the time with her going over these actuarial tables, how they were put together, how these insurance companies work; what made sense and what didn't make sense.

I found out there were many kinds of actuarial tables; there was the standard actuarial table; the 1940 actuarial table; there was the actuarial table they used for pensions; the one they used for life insurance; the Immediate Participation Guarantee - the IPG Plan - Deposit Administration.

In other words, they didn't all have to be the ordinary deferred annuities where you put in a certain amount of money over a certain number of years, based on the individual, and then you begin to collect back your pension. First, your own contribution in the case of a contributory pension; then the employers', and these were the standard annuities which obviously wouldn't work for a large group of workers; plus how did you know the actuarial tables made any damn sense, you see.

LG: Anyway, when we got through with all this, I said, "Let's draw up a couple of charts." We drew up five charts. They must be around somewhere in the records here or in Hawaii. We drew up these charts based on the data they supplied us which was the number of men in the industry in Longshore, their length of service, and their average age. That's the basic data you work on in getting a pension plan together. Well, I still recall that opening session with the employers -

Ward: After the recess?

LG: After the recess. I went down there and had this material and went over it with Jack. We had stayed up a little bit too late talking with some of the guys on the committee who were there and just generally relaxing, so that I hadn't had an awful lot of sleep, but I was there, on time. The meeting got under way and here were these fellows I hadn't seen before sitting across the table from us and the employers at their side or in the row behind them.

They got started and they had this man Melinkoff and his assistant, who I think was Reynolds. They presented the ordinary type of pension including the purchase of the deferred annuities. They didn't propose a Deposit Administration Plan or anything else.

The Deposit Administration Plan at least had the minor advantage that, assuming that the actual result in terms of the work force as compared to the actuarial tables gave you what they called a favorable result, this meant that more people died than were supposed to die, in the case of pensions; in case of life insurance, less people die than are supposed to die. At least the fund itself gets the benefit after the insurance company takes theirs.

When they got through, we said, "That's fine, but - ". At that point, Phil Maxwell was handling the negotiations for the employers on pensions. Phil turned towards us and said, "Did you bring your expert down?" I said, "He's here; I've been given the job." Everybody laughed like they thought it was just a lot of fun.

LG: Well, luckily, I had done my homework, which is awfullyimportant in any set of negotiations, particularly on something like pensions or health and welfare or any complicated issue. I had all these charts in a large brief case, carefully tabulated.

So, I took them out and said, "Now, working on your actuarial tables, here's Chart No. 1 accurately drawn." They looked it over for a while and said, "Yes, we would have done your work for you, but it's good. It seems to be accurate - okay, age dispersion and everything else."

Then I went through these charts and got to the last one, and they realized where I was going and they began to introduce reservations but without any success because all I asked was, "Are the figures correct? The data you have given us was characteristic?" "Yeah, yeah - it's correct."

So, I said, "Well, based upon what you just proposed we have it figured out; I'll show you the last chart; either it was for every dollar that was put into pensions or for every fifty cents, the men would sometimes get a nickel back." They looked at that for a long time and said, "Well, maybe those figures are right but that's not the way things work." No explanation. We had worked the thing out to the point where we took their own logic and their own type of pensions to show what happens.

Well, one of the reasons could be that partially because of the war, I guess, and partially because the work force in Hawaii did not have a characteristic age dispersion, you didn't have a characteristic number like we did up and down the west coast in longshore, with quite a balance of guys in the older bracket, with a number of men over 65 still plugging away.

This was not true, however, in Hawaii. During the war, a lot of older Japanese, even though they could still work on the front, were disgusted by the whole thing that was going on and quit; never came back, even after the war.

Then, again, a lot of longshore work was being done by Filipinos who are not big but very strong, very hardworking, and it could be that at a certain

LG: point it was more than they could take. In other words, come 45 or 50 years, they either got accident prone or it was just too much for them and they had to get into some other kind of work.

That's where we got into a real debate. I said, "Well, we did not draw up the actuarial data; you're the ones who supplied us with the material. We did not draw up this basic statistical information; we don't have it. It came from the companies, the ages, the work records of the men, and so forth and so on.

"If the figures you give us are characteristic because of the nature of the work force and the nature of the work and the high incidence of attrition that the work causes, then of course our data is correct. We don't know, because we didn't compile the data that you have given us."

It was an odd situation, because when we came back that afternoon, their experts were sitting in back and the employers were sitting in front!

Ward: They reversed the position!

LG: They decided we better get back in negotiations instead of having the experts fiddle around with it. That night I got a call from this actuary, Melinkoff. He says, "I understand you take a swim every evening." I said, "Yes, most nights." "You take a walk along the beach too, I understand." I said, "Yeah." He said, "Well, I'm staying down at the Royal Hawaiian."

"Well, I'll be walking in that direction," I said. Sure enough, he's there on the beach waiting; we sat around on the beach and talked. "Well, I can't argue with your information - your charts. Somebody did a good job." I said, "Yep." "And you understand them." And I said, "Yep."

Then he said, "This thing cannot be settled by experts. I suggest this. I don't care what it is you negotiate with the employers; it's entirely up to you and we're not going to stick our nose into it. Once you negotiate it, I guarantee you we'll insure it." That was it. I said, "Okay, thanks." For years afterwards, he used to stop by when he was in town; he'd come by the house.

Ward: It took him years to learn it.

LG: Yes. But he realized that there were some people in the union movement who wouldn't rely on experts; they figured that there is nothing unknowable and I generally felt that way; luckily we had some good people around who felt the same way. Linc was that way. A lot of people get an exclusive; they become the experts. They even talk in a language that's designed to make sure that nobody else can understand it.

If everybody understood what the hell they were talking about, everybody might know too much and the moment people know too much, then what the experts have to sell goes down in value; almost every little field becomes a trade secret. Linc was very helpful on this; also Bill Glazier, who came out here, you know, and later worked as an administrative assistant to the officers. He felt the same way; and Virginia Woods was excellent.

The net result was that we finally worked out what amounted to a quite good pension plan. In some ways, as good as the west coast longshore pension plan. It may not have had as good a basic benefit, but the maximum benefit went up beyond that. Once it was negotiated, and notwithstanding what their actuary told me, Prudential began to hedge.

One of their main hedges was that they were not going to use the actuarial table we used. A whole group of us had to go over for a meeting with Prudential at their headquarters in Los Angeles where we had this roundy-go-roundy with the executives. They finally insured the whole thing, and that pension plan is still in effect.

I mention this as a sidelight to what was going on in the Islands and some of the things that were developing. It also indicated something else; in the period up until then it was just a straight headon set of negotiations and clash where necessary with the employers around the basic elements of the contract.

Things had gotten to be more complicated with elements coming into the picture such as health and welfare, pensions; later on the problems of severance

LG: pay, repatriation allowance, all kinds of things that are now built into the sugar contract and longshore contract, so different from anywhere else.

Ward: Repatriation is something that didn't occur in the mainland contracts, did it?

LG: No, I guess not. As to whether or not it ought to be applied is another story. If a guy comes up here from Mexico and keeps sending his money home and works here for 10, 15, 20 years in one area of agriculture - let us say, around Paterson, where some of the guys work the year around - why repatriation allowance shouldn't be applicable to him, I don't know.

Anyway, as these things developed, Jack's expertise and know-how - the same sort of expertise he manifested at the time of the Fair Labor Standards Act suit - became more and more valuable: it became a major contribution to the work of the union.

So, these were some of the things that were going on in the Islands; but once the Lanai strike was over, a certain chapter in Hawaii that ran from '46 through '51 - that was sort of the end of that.

Ward: The feudalism was pretty well dissipated. Right?

LG: Yes. The union had gotten over the hump. And - oh, something that had almost become a slogan. The union was here to stay, became a way of life on the plantations, became a way of life for the pineapple workers and the waterfront. The impact swept all through the economic, social and political structure of Hawaii. It took various forms, but it became a somewhat different course of history; although not without its difficulties . . .

Ward: When did the runaway plantations operations begin? They were of so much concern for a while.

LG: There was no such thing as runaway in sugar plantations -

Ward: But pineapple, though.

LG: Right, because in the case of sugar one of the reasons for the industry in Hawaii was not only that they were able to grow sugar profitably; one of the reasons they became part of the U. S. as a territory, instead of British, was to make sure of the access of sugar in the U. S. market; the sugar industry there for many, many years operated under the covering blanket of the Sugar Act, so sugar played one role.

Pineapple was different. In the case of pineapple there were two major factors in operation, resulting not in runaway shops so much as those interests expanding their holdings in other parts of the world, particularly in the Philippines, while some of their holdings in Hawaii began to contract. For example, an outfit like California Packing Corporation had pineapple plantations in the Philippines, and still do on the island of Mindanao.

Ward: Where they had plenty of trouble, I bet.

LG: Yeah, as a matter of fact, one time I was wondering how in the devil we could give a little help to some of those people down there by shooting a couple more managers in the ass.

As a matter of fact we tried to make contact with those workers, and we did. We also got copies of some of their agreements, which seemed more like company agreements. They didn't even have wage scales in the contract.

In comparatively recent years they opened up some very big holdings in Thailand, but not for long. Perhaps the unstable political situation made them decide to get out - though in the case of Hawaiian Pine, the biggest producer there, it didn't. Libby, McNeil and Libby had holdings in the Philippines. I don't think Libby has given up pineapple entirely, even though there is no operation in Hawaii.

Around Oahu, the three major producers were Hawaiian Pineapple Company, Castle and Cooke, Cal-Pack and Libby. There is no Libby cannery any more. There is still a CalPack cannery, but CalPack also had interests in the Philippines. Libby closed up entirely on the island of Molokai. That's one of the runaway plantations you're thinking about and where we had a good deal of hassle . . . .

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LG: So, let me complete. Libby expanded its holdings to the Philippines. CalPack was talking the same way and that created a good deal of consternation.

Ward: You were talking about Molokai?

LG: Those were both on the island of Molokai. CalPack also had some operations on the island of Oahu. The other big inroad on the pineapple lands was the expansion of Honolulu into big suburban areas. They built what really amounts to a whole new city, though actually it is a part of Honolulu. People commute to work there all the time. It's right in the pineapple fields practically, called Mililani Town -

Ward: That's on the other side of the Pali, then?

LG: No - no, Mililani Town would be out toward Waialua. It's not in the same direction. It's toward the other end of the island. The end of that island would be west - it's on a small plateau, maybe 2,000 feet at the most. Then there's a huge plateau area that was excellent pineapple land, partly because of altitude and the kind of rainfall they have there.

So, these are the things that took place in pineapple. A lot of the small canneries folded entirely, like several on Kauai that just gave up. There is still a pineapple cannery going on the island of Maui.

Ward: Would that be an argument of the employers that the union forced the small guys out of business?

LG: You're not talking of small people; even the ones who were on Kauai are not like small farmers. The main problem there was whether the holdings were big enough to warrant a completely modern cannery. The canneries in Honolulu proper, I guess, have as modern machinery as anybody can find. I don't know if you have ever seen pictures of them at work.

Ward: I've been in a cannery.

LG: Well, a pineapple cannery - to see the size of the operation! One of the big things they invented was something they called the Ginaca machine, invented by a worker so the pineapple could be peeled by machine.

Ward: Kind of shave it off with a sharp edged cylinder?

LG: Right. That's been in effect for many, many years now. Well, taking the "eyes" out is still a hand process, unless you want to lose an awful lot of the fruit. They finally decided losing a good deal of the pineapple didn't make much difference because they could use it either for mulch or for juice; a great deal of juice comes out of pineapple production.

The amount of pineapple, the proportion of pineapple being moved into the U. S. market from Hawaii has changed. At one time Hawaii had something close to a monopoly on production. No pineapple is produced on the mainland of the U. S. Well, Puerto Rico at one time tried pineapple. It's never been a good variety; once in a while you see the fruit in the eastern markets, fresh but small. It didn't compare with the kind of agricultural production they had in Hawaii.

There was a contraction in production later on; imports from Mexico, particularly fresh pineapple, a little bit of it canned; greater imports from the Philippines, obviously because of the advantage there of the terribly low wage rates, which more than offset the shipping costs. The great change that took place around the late 1960s was the importation of fresh pineapple.

Ward: Air transportation did that, didn't it?

LG: Air transportation made a big difference. Pineapple has a fairly decent shelf life, somewhere around four to five days. It won't have the same shelf life as some things like apples, and the problem on shipping pineapple was that by the time it got here it wasn't fresh, really; when pineapple begins to run, that's it. When the juice begins to move down towards the bottom, it can't be reversed in any way.

One thing that helped was airplane traffic, because a lot of planes were going down there. Tourist industry began to boom. The planes had nothing to take back. They had a certain amount of cargo to take down because it became more and more profitable to ship a lot of essential parts for automobiles, and what have you, by plane rather than by ship.

LG: You didn't have to carry big inventories that way; an advantage for the businessman, but they had no return cargo. True, there would be some flowers, but that doesn't amount to enough.

Somewhere along the line I'd heard their initial agreement with some of the airlines was to ship the pineapple over here fresh for as little as 7½ cents a pound. Of course, that's an awful big break on fresh fruit. Consequently, you'll see fresh pineapple on the market now, and it's not priced all that high. Of course, these days they price everything high, but initially over here you could pick up a fresh pineapple for 50, 55 cents, and they were quite good. They had a whole process of convincing and educating the consumer on how to use pineapple.

But the expansion of the fresh fruit market has also made a big difference. One of the results now is that there is an attempt to cultivate the pineapple in such a manner that you get more of an all-year around crop; it used to be highly seasonal. These things have changed, but I don't see any further contraction of the pineapple industry right now.

I'd say the major pressure on pineapple would be the attractiveness for other purposes of a lot of the land in Hawaii; there's similar pressure on sugar. A lot of this land is not far away from Honolulu and if you look at the distance as compared to commuting standards on the mainland, it doesn't amount to anything; but that's been solved now.

Of course the containers now which are refrigerated also make a difference. You don't have to get complete refrigeration to ship pineapple because they don't want that much fresh at one time. A regular refrigeration ship, like Matson, can have refrigerated containers in addition to others; there's a method of plugging them in.

I'd say that the principal danger about the further contraction of pineapple would emanate from the push of real estate interests and the greed of the estates. An awful lot of the land on which pineapple is cultivated is not owned by the companies. It's owned by various estates such as the Bishop Estate, the II Estate, Campbell Estate.

LG: They are constantly pressuring for additional payments on their lease rental; and there's always speculation, I guess, in the minds of the companies as to what they do when the lease runs out, because the estate is comparing these rents to what the devil they could get for a long-term lease on the same land for housing. Their interest in maintaining agriculture in Hawaii you can put in your eye and see fine. It's one of the things that's part of the rape of the Islands.

Anyway, I just thought I'd give you some of that background on the pension negotiations.

Ward: Very interesting. Now what?

LG: I might want to bounce back later and cover some of the other things that happened in 1953. In 1953, we were still on strike at the place across San Francisco Bay - Colgate-Palmolive. To give you an idea what the employer attitude was and the atmosphere of the times; that strike went on eight months at Colgate. It finally would up with Paul Heide and Ole Fagerhaus going east and making rounds in a camper spreading a boycott of Colgate-Palmolive products, going into every labor council in small towns, big towns, big cities.

Chili went back there; it took us a hunk of money, but we got the New Jersey Colgate Plant shut down. It was not for a great deal of time; primarily done through the Teamsters. It was a long and bitter fight. The company was obviously determined to crack the union.

The atmosphere was still on - it hadn't changed any. In '53, Jack's trial was still on, and a key witness against him was Jack Kawano. When the guys began to check out Kawano's record in the 1949 strike, he did practically nothing; just sort of disappeared. He did come out and support Governor Stainback's fact-finding board for the 14 cents; tried to put it as a patriotic thing, that the real reason we stayed out for more money was not because it was in the interests of the workers - it was just because it was Communist party policy.

LG: He had to concede, however, that later on we won the strike and got a tremendous amount of dough as well as finally getting parity on wages. He also appeared as a witness against our guys in the un-American Activities Committee hearings down there.

In 1953 the appeal on the Bridges-Robertson-Schmidt case was still going on. Even during the Supreme Court hearings, as I recall, the government arrogance in this thing was fantastic.

There was some other case pending at the time that had to do with one of the same points that was raised in the Bridges case, res adjudicata or statute of limitations; the government attorney representing the Department of Justice made the crack, before the court, I believe, that as far as the Department of Justice was concerned, they were prepared to lose the other one if they could get the conviction upheld on Bridges, Robertson and Schmidt.

It had become amazingly crude; during this whole period, beginning in 1950 with the Korean War, they put the Wage Stabilization Board into effect, which was an attempt to control wages during that war; no attempt to control prices.

It didn't even have the facade of the World War II period. I think the whole feeling of the people really made OPA stick. During that war, housewives felt it was part of their obligation to inspect all the price lists, and if there was the slightest change, bingo! - reports and screaming and what have you. You had the most widespread policing of prices that the country had ever seen. Of course, nothing of the sort during the Korean War, because here was -

Ward: It wasn't that kind of a war.

LG: It wasn't that kind of a war. Truman himself called it a police action. It was just another attempt to kick the hell out of labor - nothing more, nothing less; some of the unions foregoing wage increases, or getting nothing at all, or very small increases. When we negotiated the Longshore pension increase, how much better that was than anything won by Steel, or Auto even.

LG: We made quite an issue of this, of course, in the paper. And it was terribly important for our men to realize that even though it was a rough period, we were getting results; that was the key. And the fight paid - the fight was worthwhile.

At the 1953 convention, we made the decision that inasmuch as the BRS case had not yet come down - the '53 Convention was sometime in April, no later than early May - we ought to elect standby officers to take charge in the event Bridges and Robertson and Schmidt's convictions were upheld. And the convention was pretty tense on that score; even though the union was in quite good health.

As a matter of fact, there were some interesting stories at the time, including one in Fortune, that after all the turmoil of Taft-Hartley and the CIO expulsion, the union was better off than ever.

The net result at the convention was Jimmy Fantz of Portland was elected a standby officer in the event Harry went to the clink, and Joe Kealaleo (Joe Blurr) of Hawaii was elected to take the place of Bob Robertson if he had to serve time. We elected those standby officers for no other purpose than to serve notice on the courts and the CIO and the employers that the union was going to stick around.

Any funny ideas they had that they might behead the union and that the union would then begin to die off - the announcements of our death were periodic; they were just whistling in the dark, that's all; whistling past the graveyard - their own.

So, this was the atmosphere at the time we elected the standby officers; then in '53 two things happened at almost exactly the same time. The Supreme Court ruled our way on Bridges-Robertson-Schmidt, and Jack Hall was convicted.

When Jack and the other Smith Act defendants were convicted, our members shut down; everybody in Hawaii walked out for a day.

Sure it was a blow, particularly to Jack and his family; but the attitude of the union was that if anything they were even more determined to just hang

LG: in there, not back away at all. In the course of all this so much had been exposed about the employers; who their friends were and who their enemies. The air really was cleared; talk about a period of education and understanding among workers - that was it!

Come Labor Day, we decided to make that a big thing in Hawaii; we had big Labor Day gatherings on all the islands and we decided to bring additional forces down there. Harry went down there for the Labor Day thing; I did.

In Honolulu, they had an old-fashioned parade through the downtown area of Honolulu and wound up at the Iolani Palace, the Governor's Palace - it had been the palace of the old royalty. They had a mass meeting on Kauai, a big parade and floats, and a rather pleasant picnic afterwards. I went over there to speak.

There was a big gathering in Honakaa, of all places. I think Jack Hall was over there, and that was the sugar plantation area - that would be the northern part of the Hamakua coast, several plantations around there. There were speakers on the island of Maui - it was a real outpouring for Labor Day and in support of Jack.

There was also a feeling of confidence that if the union could take all the bumping around and come through it with victory on the Bridges-Robertson-Schmidt case, that we would win out on the Hall case as well.

I know that we didn't break stride - the union just kept pounding away; but that did not stop the government. I guess that's something that somebody else will have to come along and study; when some of these things get going, they seem to have their own inner motion like . . . .

Ward: Parkinson's Law?

LG: I don't know if it's Parkinson's Law, but there's another law; I think it's Murphy's Law; if anything can get fucked up, it will be. When something gets going like a redbaiting campaign, it develops a motion of its own, and to turn the thing around has to be pretty dramatic, like in the case of (Senator) McCarthy.

LG: The redbaiters have an unlimited appetite; they have to keep making headlines, which becomes very intoxicating to them. There's a whole staff that builds a vested interest; they get all kinds of snakes and stoolpigeons who begin to make a lifetime career of this, hoping it will go on forever; and there will always be soft pickings.

These "experts" they have, like Paul Crouch against Bridges. He turns up in Hawaii, of course. It becomes a self-perpetuating institution. This kept going in 1953, even though by that time about the only impact it was having in terms of our own membership was just to harden them; to what degree it had impacts elsewhere, I don't know; whether it made a difference, in the election of some of these politicians - no question it kept their names before the public. Lots of them think that way.

The Velde Committee

LG: In the middle of 1953 the Velde Committee came to town. You know, these guys would take turns being chairman of the Un-American Activities Committee. For example, some two-bit Congressman - that's all (Harold H.) Velde was - would say, "Look, it's my turn now to get a couple of these headlines," and they would come out here.

Sometimes they would have a sub-committee of one or two. The only people who were in full complement would be the staff; these were the guys whose total day's work was to turn up another list of witnesses and ask them the standard question. They would measure their success by the head-count. When the Velde Committee was here, by that time there was a real fight-back on the whole damn business.

I was in the Islands at the time in the middle of sugar negotiations in 1953. Chili was hauled up before the Committee; Dick Lynden, Paul Heide. I guess they figured it was time to give the warehousemen their turn in the barrel, but they must have expected to have me in there too.

LG: I recall a night or two before I was due to leave for Hawaii, the process server came by the house. We were living on Ashbury Terrace; my dad was visiting and I told him he'd better answer the door because they'd been running around with these subpoenas. The guy asked for me and my dad said, "No, he's not home - he's gone; I don't know when he'll be back." No attempt to plague us.

As a matter of fact, some of the guys in San Francisco were pretty friendly. I think I mentioned a man whose name was either Fitzgerald or Fitzpatrick, with the Red Squad here. One time, he came into the office and he had a whole bunch of subpoenas. He said, "Is Harry around?" I said, "No, he's out of town."

He said, "Well, how about Lou Goldblatt, is he here?" I said, "No, he's gone too." Here he is sitting right across the table talking to me, across the desk. And he goes down a list of guys. "No, he's not here," or "He doesn't belong here at all." Finally, he turned to me and said, "Look, Lou, we gotta get some guys served." (laughter) He had no use for the goddam thing. He was a nice egg, actually.

Anyway, these are some of our guys called up. One of our old-timers, who worked at Illinois Glass at the time - Ole Fagerhaus; you know Ole.

Ward: Oh sure, yes.

LG: An awfully good man; he still plugs away, gives a hand once in a while on organizing; he's in his seventies, you know, in great shape. Once in a while he goes back and helps his father out! In Minnesota some place. They come off the land and Ole is a real wonderful down-to-earth guy.

Well, during that Velde Committee hearing the longshoremen called a stop-work meeting -some 3,000 turned up at City Hall. I think it was that hearing that broke into a big riot at one point. They were washing people down the stairs at City Hall, I think.

Ward: Oh, yes.

LG: I'm not sure if it was that hearing or a later hearing.

Ward: I think that's about '53 or '54 - somewhere in there.

LG: No, it was later, I'll tell you why because I was in town when that took place and I wasn't in town at the time the longshoremen's demonstration took place.

Ward: Well, anyway, I know damn well that the staircase hosing down was when I was working at a plastic factory.

LG: Oh, Becky Jenkins (daughter of a longshore leader) was mixed up in that. I must have been in town because I remember getting a call from Archie Brown (prominent as a Communist and in Local 10) and Archie was saying, "Lou, you gotta do something - this is fascism!" I said, "Well, how are we doing at the hearing?" He said, "Oh,everybody is up in arms at the Committee." I said, "Are we winning?" He said, "Yes." So, I said, "Well, then, it can't be fascism." (laughter)

Not that I was that cool; once in a while, though, you have to think of something a little bit crazy. But I remember in Ole's case Owens-Illinois decided they were going to discharge him. The un-American Activities Committee measured its success by how many scalps they could hang on the wall. They had been very successful in this, and as far as I know the only place where they have not had any luck was with the ILWU around the bay area.

This was a different island in the whole country; we were determined nothing of the sort was going to happen. I had worked at Owens-Illinois and I knew some of the people there, but I hadn't seen any of them for years. I recall at that time calling up Henry Wade, who was then the manager of the place.

Later on when he retired, I couldn't shake loose of him; he'd be around the building all the time just to go to lunch or to spend the evening; go out and have drinks; sort of indicated that he'd always felt that the way the company had handled some of these things was all wrong; insisted on taking me by his apartment, meeting his daughter and his wife.

LG: As a matter of fact, I dragged him along to a meeting of Local 10; Martin Luther King was talking there to a group of longshoremen.

Well, anyway, I called Henry Wade and said, "Look, if you let Ole go, the place is going down; a matter of policy, that's all." He said, "I'm just telling you - those are company orders. You've got to give me a way out. And if you don't have one, there's nothing we can do about it. We'll take it to arbitration." I said, "No, I'm not going to arbitration - I'll call you back."

I talked about it to several people and then called him back and said, "We'll make one proposition to you and no others; no purpose in kicking this thing around further. You keep him on the job and you can issue a statement to the effect that unless he is vindicated by the courts, he will be fired. You wait until the appeal is finished. He's still going to have his day in court, like anybody else." He said, "Well, maybe I can handle that." Ole stayed on the job.

About that time we were winning a lot of these cases, notably the cases in Hawaii through Judge Metzger. It must have been about that time that the Watkins decision (an historic case in which John Watkins, a UAW organizer, used the First Amendment to the U. S. Constitution in refusing to testify re Communism) came along - I think that was where the Supreme Court said that taking the Fifth Amendment didn't in any way have a connotation of guilt; that it was no different than citing the First Amendment or any other amendment.

Eventually the un-American Activities Committee found it could get nowhere with these contempt citations in Congress, at least not on the refusal to testify. It also pretty well determined which way people would have to act before these committees, because the moment you opened up the door on answering questions, you ran the risk of all kinds of things.

Ward: Well, for instance, if you answer the question, "Are you now or have you ever been?" - if you answer "Yes", then you have to implicate all the people you've ever met or else you're in contempt of Congress; whether you are willing to admit membership or not doesn't have anything to do with it.

LG: Correct - the moment you get into that area, you've opened up Pandora's Box and there is no way to close it. They're the only ones who can close it on you; that's where they get people to spill their guts. Anyway, insofar as we were concerned, we kept our record intact.

Ward: Well, what happened to Ole?

LG: Ole stayed on the job. Later on, we hauled him off the job for other reasons, primarily to organize.

But this un-American Activities Committee was still functioning; the McCarthy Committee was going full blast, out of their goddam, cotton-picking minds. The McCarran Act had been passed; remember all the fuss about that? In the case of the ILWU, they began to hit us with parts of this Act, even though it was primarily designed against the foreign born.

I remember we were all part of that Protection for the Foreign Born Committee; I was speaking to various groups on the thing; it was all one move against us, just like screening was used to try to blacklist guys.

The McCarran Act was used primarily against some of our Filipino members. One of our leaders in Hawaii, a fine Filipino leader, Simeon Bagasol, had been active in the inter-Island strike, had gotten blacklisted off the waterfront, but finally got back to work. He was cited and his case was finally won.

But they went against a lot of our Filipino members. For example, Immigration made an interpretation - I think it was under the McCarran Act - that if one of the Filipinos, a member of our union, say Alaska Cannery Workers, went to Alaska to work the salmon season, coming back to Seattle was a new entry because Alaska was a territory, not a state, at the time.

We actually took one of those cases up to the U. S. Supreme Court, a case involving several guys. The one who had been picked up by Immigration was a man named Alec Alcantra. I guess they always list these names alphabetically, so he must have

LG: been listed first. He was one of our cannery workers and they got him under moral turpitude because he ran a small gambling game when he got back to Seattle.

This was all out-and-out intimidation. It would have meant at that time that one of our Filipino members in Hawaii - a delegate, an officer or what-have-you, coming over to the mainland for a convention, on returning to Hawaii would have been a new entry and could have been picked up for deportation; they were not citizens as yet.

Bear in mind that Filipinos came in here not as foreigners but as "nationals" - a distinction that must have arisen under these treaty arrangements; they had come in that way for years. So, even though we had won in the middle of 1953 on BRS, we sure as hell were not out of the woods.

All during the same period there was also a consistent fight for labor unity. We had a major campaign going to try to re-establish the old Waterfront Federation of Longshoremen, Teamsters, Seamen, Warehousemen; including mass leaflet distributions, using a lot of our officials to go out there and talk to some of the guys.

It did a great deal to get into the ranks of other unions; there was a genuine neutralization of some of these attacks by direct man-to-man contact on the job. What is picked up is that there's a good understanding among the membership that you are fighting for certain principles, and just because some guys have turned tail or have chickened out doesn't mean to say you give up the fight.

Well, I'd better mention a couple of things. I told you that we had taken the fishermen into our union. During that same period the attrition was still pretty heavy against unions like the Fur Workers, United Public Workers - remember Abe Flaxer (president of the State, County and Municipal Workers) and that group? It was getting pretty bad.

I recall a whole group of these officials being cited on Taft-Hartley. Hugh Bryson was indicted on Taft-Hartley and later on he did some time in jail. The Marine Cooks and Stewards were violently attacked from the CIO and particularly from Lundeberg.

LG: There was a big beef on the waterfront around the "Aleutian" where Lundeberg had signed a backdoor agreement on this ship to put on his own men in place of the MC&S crew; that was a major confrontation on the waterfront, with Lundeberg bringing damn near a thousand armed guys down there. That was a battle which looked as though it would break out in fierce violence. The decision was finally made that the only way the MC&S might be saved was to have the members sign in the ILWU; this had to be done man-by-man, and there was a major signup.

I think that Lundeberg realized that in a direct election for the MC&S in the stewards department with the ILWU on the ballot, he would have lost out. I'll have to check as to when exactly that election took place and what form it took. They finally washed the MC&S out of business, but that was done by devising a new bargaining unit.

Lundeberg filed for an election on the ships to include the Sailors, the Marine Firemen and the Marine Cooks and Stewards; this would give them a combination that would overwhelm the Marine, Cooks and Stewards.

In the meantime, the ILWU was still battling away, still trying to protect the MC&S and other progressive unions.

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Ward: Okay, Lou, we're going to talk about some of your own troubles now.

LG: You want to talk about some of the committees I was hauled before, right? Well, there were some rather important developments in relationship to the ILA which I guess resulted in my being hauled before . .

Ward: Okay, let's take the ILA first.

LG: The one that I recall that takes priority is, there was an un-American Activities Committee hearing again - the year was 1956.

Ward: You went to the one at the Post-office?

LG: The Post-office building and Richard Arens was the counsel. I was hauled before that committee. The guy I recall being there in addition to myself was Victor Arnautoff. Victor Arnautoff was an artist.

Ward: Yes, he taught at Stanford. Every September there is a public art festival in San Francisco, and Arnautoff the year before had done a caricature of Dick Nixon, who was then Vice-President; that irritated all the dogs and they hauled him up before the committee.

LG: Right - so it had to be some time in 1956. And you're right about the art festival where he had a caricature of Dick Nixon. It was a typical un-American Activities Committee hearing. George Andersen went along with me, as counsel. I guess I was cited because they hadn't managed to pick me up in the 1953 hearing. I was living here (in Mill Valley) at the time.

Ward: In this house?

LG: Positive - yes, we moved here in 1955. The guy who came up to serve the subpoena here was the local chief of police - Dan Tursik. I bump into him once in a while. For years when I'd see him, all he could do was talk about how sorry he was that he had to come up and do this, but after all he was doing his job. And I'd make the crack, "That's what the hangman said, you know."

I almost got even with Dan, very unintentionally, by the way. I was playing golf one time at the Mill Valley golf course and on one hole - what the devil he was doing out there I don't know, but he walked out pretty close to the green - it was really the only decent shot I hit all day. The ball was straight and strong and it didn't miss him by more than an inch or two. Whether he thought it was deliberate or not, I don't know, but I couldn't have seen him from where I was.

Anyway, he came up here and said the neighbors were complaining about a dog barking and I said, "I have no dog." He said, "Well, I have something for you." And he had the subpoena - I'm pretty sure that was the one, unless it was the one for the Eastland Committee. It was not the one for the McClellan Committee because the McClellan Committee telegram I got when I was back in Colorado staying with Frank Oppenheimer (a prominent scientist and brother of the famous Robert Oppenheimer).

Ward: Well, this committee hearing with George Andersen - what did you do? Just take the Fifth?

LG: They had testimony against me in 1953. Apparently, one of their stable of stoolpigeons had been all prepared to testify against me in 1953, so they went right ahead with the testimony. They had the usual stuff that I had been a member of the Young Communist League, and so forth and so on.

Ward: Who was he?

The Witness Lies

LG: A guy named Lou Rosser - I had known him in Los Angeles many, many years before, some time in the 1930s. He said I had had an alias, Lou Miller, and some other stuff. Under cross examination, when somebody asked him questions whether he was a member of a union, he said, he was a member of Local 10. He had never been a member of Local 10.

Of course, there are never any perjury indictments on these things. He had me placed at all kinds of meetings in Los Angeles. I was living up here. I was with the union or the State CIO. He was all over the place; the usual business.

I took the Fifth Amendment although I decided something at that hearing, and George thought it was okay. He said, "Sure, go ahead and give it a try." I spoke out: "You know, we should make an issue of this business that taking the Fifth Amendment is not a presumption of guilt." It was the Watkins decision I was referring to.

I got into a big hassle with the chairman of the committee, (Chester) Doyle. I kept after him and said, "It's your job to protect me in this hearing, particularly against this guy who is trying to badger me. I am not going to be badgered; I'm not going to be buffaloed and I want you to protect me."

He said, "Don't worry about that; there isn't any presumption of guilt or anything of the sort." "I'm going to take the Fifth Amendment and that's all." So, we went round and round for a while.

LG: The counsel, this guy Arens, struck me as something odd; he was still hung over. I thought that as long as I kept addressing myself to Doyle about protecting my rights, there would be no great problem. It didn't turn out to be. When I had been with the State CIO, Doyle was one of the guys the CIO helped to get elected in L. A. He must have remembered it too, because he was very uncomfortable -

Ward: Chester Doyle, wasn't that?

LG: Chet Doyle, yes; he was from somewhere around the Compton area.

Ward: He accepted left-wing support in the beginning and as soon as he got there, the hell with it.

LG: Oh, yeah, just like Tenney and the guy, what's his name, who headed the Little Dies Committee here -

Ward: Tenney?

LG: He later was mayor of Los Angeles - (Sam) Yorty!

Ward: I understand he's a friend of Nixon's now.

LG: Oh, yes, that seems to be logical. At some point along the line I got into a fight with the counsel because he started reading from some pamphlet under the name of Lou Miller. I let him go on for a while and then I said, "Look, if you want to hand me something, don't throw it." And we got into a pretty bad exchange and I let go full blast about the committee and everything else.

I had forgotten all about it until many years later when I was invited to speak at a teachers meeting that was being held over here (in Mill Valley) just about the time that school breaks up. They had a nice dinner there; Terry and I went. Their activists were union people and the guy in charge of the meeting must have had a real sense of mischief, and also was very curious about things, because he'd gotten a tape - I don't know where the tape came from; maybe one of the regular stations had it - of my clash with the committee. It sounded better than I thought it did at the time. It was really quite something; talk about <u>deja vu</u>!

Ward: The meeting wasn't antagonistic to you?

LG: No, no - it was very friendly, because there was quite an impassioned speech there about the un-American Activities Committee.

The thing that really got me angry, sitting there waiting to be called before that damned committee, was I saw a number of people whom I recognized; all good leftwingers. I'm sure there wasn't a person there who had ever cheated anybody or doublecrossed his neighbor in his whole life; Victor Arnautoff, whom I knew for a long time.

There was a young girl sitting there who I think was in law school at the time; she later on made her main job seeking prison reform and fighting for the release of prisoners who had been kicked around for years - Solodoy, I think her name was - a very nice gal. At the end of my speech, she broke out in applause and some other people joined in.

I started walking out and just as I got to the door, Congressman Doyle said, "You're not dismissed." I said, "What else is there?" He said, "You're dismissed now." Anyway, I went up to Harrington's and had a drink. Phil Eden (an ILWU research assistant) was there and he said, "That's a contempt." I said, "I don't think so," and George didn't think so either.

I got a call from Victor Arnautoff a couple of days later and he said, "I want to thank you for one thing." And I said, "What was that?" "Well, as a result of your explosion" - the thing was in the headlines, pictures and all that stuff making it look like a big fight; Christ I couldn't have fought my way out of a paper bag with all those guys around, plus the marshal. I don't know where they found a moose that big; all the photographers;pictures and what have you.

Ward: So, what about Arnautoff?

LG: He said, "Well, this business about you and the committee made all the headlines, and my appearance just got buried. It looks as though finally they'll renew my contract" - he was on a year-to-year contract.

Ward: They went after him at Stanford?

LG: They were going to renew his contract -

Ward: But they didn't renew it?

LG: Yes, at that time they did; later on, no. This was an indication of an odd facet in this country where in many ways the private universities turned out to be better than the state ones. The state universities had this Levering Act (requiring the taking of a "loyalty" oath).

They never let go. Their idea is to hound a person until he disappears; hound him out of a city, out of a job and make it impossible for him to get a new job. Anyway, that was the only beneficial thing that happened there, as far as I could see.

(Interview 26: 12 September, 1978)

Ward: Are we finished with the House un-American Activities Committee session in San Francisco?

LG: There were a lot of headlines on the thing. The headlines actually were not accurate. Something to the effect that I had gotten thrown out of the hearings; that wasn't really true. Sure, it made the sort of copy that newspapermen like; and the photographs! But that wasn't really what happened.

Ward: Well, the marshal took your arm or something?

LG: Right; and I broke away from him and said, "Look, I've got no quarrel with you," and I started to walk out. I assumed that he was there to take me out. When I got to the door that was when Doyle said, "You're not excused." And I stopped and he said, "You're excused."

A couple of small sidelights about that. We were already here in Mill Valley. Maybe this was a sign of the times; it wasn't just the new neighborhood we were living in. One of the things I recall is that almost all the neighbors - I had met most of them by that time - made it their business to be on the

LG: street when I was driving home to tell me they thought I was doing the right thing and they supported me. Quite a contrast to some of the earlier years where, partly because we lived in San Francisco, Ashbury Terrace, the kids were given a bad time by the other youngsters. I'm inclined to think it was part of the redbaiting.

I remember Terry had been active in the PTA (Parent-Teachers Association); we had two of our youngsters in the Twin Peaks School and Liza when she got old enough would go there too. Terry was due to be president of the PTA. She was down in Hawaii visiting me when she got a wire saying that their nominating committee had reconsidered, expressing a reflection of the times and the intense redbaiting that was going on.

This was a public school - Twin Peaks. I think the impact on the family was felt when we were there. It was a bit gratifying to find that the people around Mill Valley didn't feel the same way. Things had begun to change.

I believe it was around 1955, wasn't it, when Eisenhower had his confrontation with McCarthy. That was the time Senator McCarthy decided to take out after some of the army brass. I recall the special counsel was Joe Welch, Boston Back Bay, a stiff-necked Republican who did one of those classic jobs of taking McCarthy apart.

Ward: He was the Leon Jaworski of his time.

LG: Oh, I think he showed a lot more stuff; Jaworski's latest caper is not particularly distinguished, is it?

In 1955 or close thereafter the Supreme Court issued its first decision that began to challenge the Smith Act. It wasn't in the New York case, but it was one of the subsidiary cases. I think it was around that same decision later on that the Jack Hall case was thrown out.

Checking on those dates, the year of the un-American Activities Committee was in 1956; the hearing before the Eastland Committee was around mid-1957 - June and July.

Ward: All right, let's go on with that now.

LG: And the McClellan hearing was in 1959.

Relations With The ILA

Ward: All right, Eastland.

LG: Okay, we're on Eastland. Somewhere around 1953, things began to move on the east coast in the ILA; Ryan was still president at the time. There was a good deal of turmoil. There had been several strikes on the east coast; in almost everyone of them, the membership was running out from under the officials, and the officials were finally catching up or sitting tight.

Ward: What you'd call a bunch of wildcats, huh?

LG: Yes, except they were more organized than that. They had a lot of local leadership support, with the national officials playing a sort of, oh, semi-mediator liaison relationship with the employers; typical Joe Ryan. The background of the ILA I don't have to spell out; it's common knowledge.

These wildcats resulted in a good deal of publicity as to what was going on in the ILA. The anti-union pressures were still on; everything that we'd said turned out to be correct. Once they began to pick off the leftwing unions, they would not stop there.

Nobody in his right mind would expect a head-on confrontation between the government, or some of the congressional bodies, directly against the main bodies of labor. They would proceed to try to nick the unions off one at a time, and the first one under attack was the ILA. The ILA was eventually suspended somewhere around 1954 or '55.

Ward: Suspended by?

LG: The AFof L. I'm also inclined to think this was prior to the merger of the CIO and the AFofL. When the ILA was expelled, although . . .

Ward: Or suspended - you used the term "suspended" a minute ago.

LG: I think maybe it was "expelled" because . . .

Ward: I never heard of suspensions.

LG: It was a situation where the AFofL began to embark on its program - sort of cleaning its own house business. This later resulted in a whole series of things; the so-called ethical practices committee that was set up by the AFofL, in which the CIO might have taken part. That was the business of improving their image by doing a job on certain unions before the government people could do it. The thing that bothered us most was that the official bodies of the AFofL were doing this job on the other workers.

I'm never going to say that the ILA was an exemplary union; we know better. Its method of operation, of course, would be anathema to an organization like ours. We belonged to the ILA at one time, back in the 30s. We broke with them because of our extreme unhappiness with them, including the fact they would not take a referendum on whether we'd join in the CIO.

This did not change the ILA's tactics one bit. Joe Ryan or "King Joe" Ryan, as he was referred to - his philosophy in life remained the same; namely, next to himself he liked silk underwear best and lived high off the hog. He even had a special fund of which he didn't have to make any particular accounting. It was looked into by one of the government bodies, I think, and there were expense chits there for taking a group of people out to the Stork Club.

This was all part of the business of conducting his anti-subversive campaign. There was a standard technique, you know, like the two recourses they seemed to use constantly - and this is not anti-religious or anti-Catholic as such - super-patriotism and the church. Very common for them to put on highly publicized mass attendance in the Catholic churches during any sort of a beef. Their endless red-baiting is common knowledge. Later on, it took the form of refusal to handle Russian cargoes.

LG: One of the scandals was about the time they held up a whole shipment of Russian furs; later on it was discovered that as soon as the right guys had been taken care of - a couple of bucks on the side - the furs got unloaded very nicely.

Yet, it was the general feeling within the ILWU - Harry felt the same way and he sure as heck had no great love for the ILA - that there were a lot of things that had to be done within the ILA, but should be the problem of the membership. The moment the government steps in on these self-appointed missions, the result invariably is that you can't get them out.

This, by the way, is what eventually happened, particularly in New York, their main concentration. A lot of the rumbles around there, the attempts to raid the ILA, finally resulted in the establishment of the so-called Bi-State Waterfront Commission.

Ward: Oh, New Jersey and New York?

LG: Jersey and New York, which in effect established the screening procedure for all longshoremen. Instead of establishing a genuine hiring hall, they established a registration system which literally was for the purpose of making sure the screening worked, the ostensible reason being to drive all the gangsters and racketeers off the waterfront.

They might have gotten some of them, but also they made sure they got anybody else who talked up, particularly against the employers. We came out openly in The Dispatcher in favor of the ILA being left alone; the fight to change the ILA was the fight of the membership itself.

Notwithstanding guys like Ryan and some of the things that took place, there were spots like Boston and Philadelphia - and even whole areas like the south - where you had fairly independent crews. Red Moran in Philadelphia had some good guys there. There was a background in Philadelphia of having a Wobbly local; it continued that way for many years, even after the Wobblies in all other parts of the country began to fall apart.

They maintained organization by issuing monthly union buttons; you had to have those in order to work. As a matter of fact, this was later picked up

LG: around here as well - the monthly union button. This was a better way of getting the job done than the union shop.

Anyway, our position was that this was an internal problem of the ILA. We put a man to work for us, Charles Velson. He's dead now; an old time trade unionist. He had been active in the Boilermakers and the Shipyard Workers, had been a boilermaker himself - rather advanced grade, where they do the designing on plates.

Ward: You put Velson on, to do what?

LG: Primarily to get in touch with the guys in the ILA, the good guys he could talk to, and to make it clear that we didn't have any use for this attack against them. We did think that far more fundamental would be a common contract expiration date with the west coast; or joint negotiations or parallel negotiations, where you keep in touch with each other. In other words, we hoped to sort of remedy the rift that had gone on from 1937 for damn near 20 years and to see if we could get things back on a trade union basis.

Along the line there, the AFofL made an attempt to dismantle the ILA by an out-and-out raid. This was led by a combined union force designated by the AFofL Executive Council, or by Meany, made up of Dave Beck and Paul Hall, the two key men; Dave Beck from the Teamsters, and Paul Hall from the Seamen's Union on the east coast.

They set up a rival organization called the International Brotherhood of Longshoremen, the IBL. It later went to an NLRB election which the ILA won hands down. Our estimate was correct: sure, the guys were damn unhappy about some of the things that were going on, like the shape-up, the shakedowns, the lack of job security, which was pretty bad in many cases; the use of preferred and star gangs; the failure to work out any kind of machinery to move men from port to port; not even from dock to dock.

It was not uncommon for a local to be confined to one dock. If there were no ships in or for some other reason things were bad, the only way they could find a job on another dock might be to just wander over there and see what their chances were; maybe yes,

LG: maybe no. In most cases the local on the other dock would say, hey, our guys go first and you have to wait. No attempt to work these things out in any kind of intelligent fashion.

You had a series of locals down in the lower East Side; the banana dock, then you had what they called the "pistol local" up near the Chelsea district; there were other locals right near there, a whole series of them. One of these local officers is now an official of the ILA -

Ward: What's the name?

LG: John Bowers. Anyway, in the course of working with the fellows in the ILA, Charlie made a lot of pretty effective contacts. You have to talk to some very peculiar people - they're not really peculiar, they're slightly different - like Tony Anastasia, who was head of the Brooklyn longshoremen.

I made a number of trips back there, primarily to to see if we could set up a meeting with (Captain William V.) Bradley. Bradley was the man who took Joe Ryan's place. Ryan stepped down or died.

Ward: Well, it doesn't matter - not too important.

LG: Captain Bradley was from the Inland Boatmen; he was not a longshoreman, but this was a group that had belonged to the Inland Boatmen's Union and had joined the ILA; he became the head of the ILA.

He was a fairly clean guy, as far as I could figure. I don't think he was mixed up with the rackets, but I couldn't help but feel that in many ways he was just an office holder. He liked his good eating and good living; pretty soon you found out that if you wanted to find him - although I rarely went by there - you went to a place across from their headquarters on 14th Street; Cavanaugh's, a very fine Irish restaurant; that's where Bradley would be.

It was still primarily the Irish group around Ryan; they continued in command. Meeting with Bradley didn't get too far. I talked to him about trying to get some coordinated work going in Washington, D. C. on the Longshore and Harbor Workers

LG: Act. We did get a bit accomplished in that direction. Also, I mentioned that we'd like to see something done in the way of better communication. As a matter of fact, they sent a delegation out to visit the west coast. Whether that was before the hearing in 1957 or afterwards, I'm not sure; whether it was everybody watching everybody else, I had no idea. Instead of its being a comparatively small delegation, it was a big group - around eight or ten.

We asked them to come out here to take a look at the hiring hall, visit our library and talk to some of our people. They came by our library at 150 Golden Gate and Ann was in charge -

Ward: Ann Rand?

LG: Yes, a very competent person. So, I introduced her to the delegation, asked her if she'd spend an hour or so just showing them around; she did. She went through the various stacks and the files - the comprehensive records we had on the contracts, arbitrations and literature concerning shipping; it was about as complete a library as you could have - an industrial or labor relations library.

I found out later from Ann, "Well, first they wanted to know if I could microfilm the whole thing - they'd like to buy it."

Their concept of something like this is, you look at it and you buy the whole thing; you get the pictures of it and it's the same thing, isn't it? Instead of thinking, where could they find a librarian to come out here and work with Ann Rand to see what they could do in the way of picking up at least some of the benefit of what we had done. (laughter) Later on, they tried to set up a bit of a research department; that showed up in negotiations and in the hearings before the Waterfront Commission.

The night they arrived, I happened to be in the office a little bit late; Bill Chester, (ILWU regional director) was there too. I got a call; it's from Teddy Gleason (a top ILA officer) and he said they were down at the St. Francis Hotel and were having a bit of a problem getting registered. I said, "Is the manager there?" They said, "Yes." "Ask him to please come to the phone." Apparently, the manager was a little bit leary of the whole thing - I don't know why.

Ward: He thought the mob had come in?

LG: They were respectably dressed, but there was something about them; I don't know. I said, "There's no problem." So, they all got registered and they got back on the phone and thanked us and asked if we wanted to go out to dinner. I said that would be fine and we would come by and pick them up.

I asked Bill to stick around and the two of us drove down there; we picked them up and I wasn't sure where we'd go, so I asked them what they wanted. They would like some steaks; they're good trenchermen and steak was still the main diet. We went over to Alfred's (a San Francisco steak house) - the place right above the tunnel and it's open late. I hadn't been there for maybe five or six years. We go in there.

I will say one thing, they may not have known too much about libraries but they sure know how to read a menu and they knew how to order. It was getting toward the tail end of the meal and I turned to Chester and said, "Do you have any money?" I looked in my wallet and I had maybe around ten bucks.

"Yes, said Bill, "but, it's only around ten or fifteen dollars." So, I said, "Forget it; we can't cover this." The waiter came over with the check and I said, "Do you want a credit card?" I don't carry these eating credit cards, like Diners Club and all that junk. "Or would you rather have my (business) card and save yourself a fee and send the bill to the office?"

The waiter said, "Let me have your card." In a few minutes, the manager is out there and said, "Lou, it's wonderful to see you." I don't recall ever meeting the guy in my life. He said, "We'll be glad to send the bill to your office." He called the waiter over and said, "Get a drink for everybody here." Well, as we were walking out, the . . . .

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Ward: You were just going to tell . . .

LG: Oh, yes, we were walking out of this restaurant and Fred Field (one of the ILA men) turned to me and said, "Well, nobody else maybe caught this, but I did. You didn't know that man and he didn't know you." So, I said, "That's true." He said, "You know, they wouldn't even take our credit card in lots of restaurants in New York." To them, I guess, this indicated standing or muscle.

Ward: Respect?

LG: Yes, respect. It impressed them more than the library or the hiring hall - but that's the way they were.

As I said one time, there was this remark by Jesus Menendez (a sugar worker) in Cuba,"Con estos bueyos tenemos arai". It means "With these oxen, you have to plow." That was his remark in Cuba during a sugar meeting in 1947. A group of delegates weren't there because they had been out at some night club until the middle of the night. He thought it was a disgrace. That's the way Jesus Menendez disposed of it.

The Shady Side Of The Street

LG: We continued the contact with the ILA. Charlie Velson was an enormously hard worker. During that campaign against the AFofL raid, he helped the ILA with their literature. He got to meet a number of the people there; some of them not the ordinary type of unionist; some of them a bit on the wrong side of the tracks.

One of the things you discover pretty quickly in New York is that to think that somebody can waltz through life simon-pure and never talk to one of these people, or run across the street when you see one coming, doesn't work; not that kind of a scene. You have a lot of little kingdoms there, particularly in the ILA.

LG: One of the people that I got to see was Tony Anastasia. Albert Anastasia, I think, had just gotten out of jail -

Ward: Albert was Tony's brother?

LG: Yes, Tony's brother; as a matter of fact, he was assassinated not too long after he got out of jail. You hear about these things as rumors and stories about his jurisdiction and how he decided to re-establish it. I guess it is typical of New York.

I began to feel some of this in the case of Tony, when I sat and talked to him. Some of the things I said would flabbergast him; then I realized I might just as well be straight even though he was not going to believe a lot of it. I remember one time talking to him at his home; I saw him there several times.

When you were talking to Tony privately, you sat downstairs in a sort of family room, a basement that had been converted. Tony didn't drink particularly, but he always had something around; he was very sociable, very pleasant and very polite at all times; friendly and anxious to learn.

The thing I kept pounding at him was, "Somewhere along the line somebody has to start merging some of these locals around here. You have all kinds of locals right here in Brooklyn. I don't know exactly where the union is going, but you sure as hell need a bigger ballpark to play in." His union was concentrated primarily around Red Hook and I think some of that advice fell on good ears; they began to put a few things together, so that perhaps the most effective local in the New York scene is the one that Tony used to be in charge of. His son-in-law, Tony Scotto, is now the head of that local. Tony Scotto is a very capable guy, and I think he knows a great deal and from all indications is a pretty good unionist.

Ward: You have to talk up because she's making it sound like a railroad train crossing a trestle. (This refers to Yarrow, a parrot engaged in rustling the paper lining the bottom of her cage.)

LG: Yarrow is a female and she's nesting.

LG: And at one of these sessions, Tony asked, "How much are you making a week?" At that time, I think the salary was about $75 dollars a week or maybe a hundred dollars. I told him, "It's in the constitution." He thought for a long time and said, "Jesus, that's smart!" And then I realized very quickly how he took the whole thing.

Ward: Officially?

LG: That's right - that's how much you got officially. That's what you reported on. Income taxes were straight. (laughter) And I remember a crack made by him one time. Around New York some of the people could quote the prices on decisions you could get from the Superior Court.

Ward: The Superior Court - that would be the lower court?

LG: The lower court, right.

Ward: Because their Supreme Court there is our Superior Court here.

LG: Right. And they could quote the prices on these decisions. This is after the Bridges victory, well, maybe a couple of years after. He asks, "How do you reach those guys?" He was talking about the Supreme Court decision. By that time, you begin to understand their lingo; "reaching" means how do you work a deal with the guy and how do you communicate with him? He simply assumed you could reach them.

Ward: How do you get the decision except by paying for it?

LG: That's right. That's the way it's done; after all, they hire a lawyer. The idea for example of conducting a mass campaign, as we did in the BRS case, in the Hall case, calling the guys out in protest over these raw deals, would be inconceivable to them. These things are done by hiring the right lawyers, paying them and spending the money where it has to be spent; how simple it is.

Tony must have been concerned about some of the things that were going around in the press, because I recall he made a crack to me: "You see and read all kinds of things about me; they call me 'tough Tony', but I'll tell you one thing: no girls, no drugs!"

Ward: In other words, he didn't run whorehouses or peddle heroin.

LG: Right. That's the way they think; he figured if he didn't get mixed up in such things, all this other stuff was a bunch of crap. Anyway, I suddenly began to see a new scene in life.

Actually the ILA thing didn't get very far because when they were in a beef with the North Atlantic Shipping Association in one of their strikes, we took the position - I pressed for it - that we shouldn't handle any east coast ships that were diverted. We sent the thing to a referendum vote, too, and got the membership to adopt it. A short time afterwards we got a telegram from Captain Bradley saying, "We'd appreciate it if you just didn't interfere into our affairs - we'll call you in case we need you."

So, it was clear that they were prepared to pick our brains, if you want to put it that way, get whatever assistance we could give them, purely as something they could pick up, but there would be no exchange for it, even though they might make vague statements that some day maybe there should be a common expiration date.

It became more and more apparent that they had no intention of moving that way. I guess to them cooperation with a union such as the ILWU with its concept of rank-and-file unionism would have been as big a menace as the Waterfront Commission moving in. I for one, in 1955, felt pretty keenly that it was a good possibility; as a result of all that effort we did give it a whirl, but it never really got off the ground.

Finally, we had no choice but to pull Charlie Velson out of there. He had done a good job; he had some very good contacts. He was able to work with a number of people.

The Eastland Committee

LG: It was on account of this that I got hauled before the Eastland Committee. The Eastland Committee at that time was a counterpart of the Subversive

LG: Activities Control Board. Remember the Subversive Activities Control Board?

Ward: The SCAB Board.

LG: The SCAB Board they called it; that was the Board that went all out against the Mine Mill and Smelter Workers. I think they got Telford Taylor to help them in that case. Maurice Travis was involved.

I got hauled before the committee and as I recall, Teddy Gleason was called too. Ryan was out of the picture; Bradley was in. I think they had defeated the attempt of the AFofL, under Beck and Paul Hall, to move in on them. I gather the general theory behind Eastland's subpoenas was that we were active on the east coast and this was a form of leftwing infiltration of the ILA. Interesting how even two unions talking to each other can be a form of infiltration.

They started off by trying to get me to answer a series of questions about the finances of the ILWU. I concluded that the purpose of those questions was solely to find out whether Charlie Velson was on our payroll, if so how much was he paid, whether he had any expense money. I figured I was not going to open that door to them.

I mean, our books had been scoured so thoroughly; I told you about the Juneau Spruce thing and the court order to go through our records. I don't know how long that damn thing went on. Internal Revenue had been around, coming to talk to me; I talked about my personal finances.

I was called to testify in a case against Vince Hallinan; that was another charge against him, on taxes. I wouldn't turn over the records of the BRS committee. I said, "I'll hold on to them and I'll read the items I think are relevant, but I will not disclose the names." We had the individual names of contributors there and I was not going to turn them over.

They finally compromised on that - they were fairly decent about it. Vince, of course, got very little for his work; a very small fee. With all this poking around, I think Internal Revenue knew all there was to be known about the ILWU's finances.

Ward: So, you refused?

LG: I told the Eastland Committee, "Look, you just get the Internal Revenue and the FBI sleuths off our back; I'll answer any questions you want and be done with it, but they'd been all over the place and I don't see any point in going into all this business." They didn't press it too hard, luckily. They wanted to know if we had anything to do with the ILA and I said, "Sure, we have certain joint union programs going that make some sense."

They wanted to know on what and I said, "Well, right now we're greatly concerned about the Longshore and Harbor Workers Act; the benefits are completely obsolete; they have to be brought up to date. Something has to be done to put that whole Act in line with what the workers are earning today, what they ought to get for their industrial injuries." Longshoremen are covered under a separate act than ordinary workmen's compensation: the Longshoremen's and Harbor Workers Act.

Gleason was called to testify and he in effect said the same thing; yes, they worked with the ILWU for the same Longshore and Harbor Workers Act, and other trade union problems. I think they were hoping to open up a whole business of the ILWU spending huge amounts of money . . . .

The McClellan Committee

Ward: What was the third committee you appeared before?

LG: The third was a hearing before the McClellan Committee. That was the one where Bobby Kennedy was the chief counsel; his brother was a member of that committee.

Ward: John was then a senator?

LG: Yes, and the work was done particularly by Bobby Kennedy. The staging that was going on there had to do with putting together the campaign by Kennedy when he ran for President in 1960.

LG: That case too, in my opinion, was a corollary - or at least caused by the AFL opening the door with their ethical practices committee. In other words, by setting up this ethical practices committee they were conceding that something new had to be added to clean up the labor movement. Of course the inevitable happened; some ambitious congressman would say, "Fine, we'll get in the act."

Out of all these hearings and everything else you got Landrum-Griffin. In 1947 you had Taft-Hartley at the beginning of the Cold War. In 1957, at the tail end of the Cold War, even though some of the anti-labor stuff was beginning to phase out, you got Landrum-Griffin; helped along in the application of this campaign for wearing white linen by the AFofL. This was also combined with a very aggressive campaign against Hoffa.

Ward: With which the Kennedys had a great deal to do?

LG: A great deal. Insofar as Hoffa and Bobby Kennedy were concerned, it became a real contest of wills. Hoffa was a very interesting guy, a very, very American product; typical of some of the things that developed in this country from initial immigrant population to the robber barons.

Ward: What was his ethnic background?

LG: Polish. Born in Detroit; worked in the warehouses - grocery warehouse, I believe. Kroeger, one of the big outfits in the midwest. Helped to organize the place where he worked sometime in the thirties; made the clink time after time for general picket line beefs. He was an effective leader; became the head of one of the big Detroit locals in the Teamsters Union, 299, I believe.

Ward: Wasn't he trying to get back into it just before he was bumped off?

LG: I'm not sure. His basic ambition was not in that direction; it was to get back in as the general president of the Teamsters Union.

I'll have to go back a little bit . . . I first met Hoffa in Hawaii. I was having dinner one night with a couple of people at the Tropics, where the Ala Moana Hotel is now, near Atkinson Drive. This

LG: Tropics was a quiet place for dinner. They served a good meal there and I liked the fellow who ran the place. Anyway, somebody came to the table; might have been Tony, the owner. He said, "Hoffa is sitting over there with a group of guys; would you like to meet him?" I said, "I don't think so, not right now - I don't think it's a good idea." I finished my dinner and found out he was staying at the Royal. His executive board was meeting in Hawaii. This must have been around 1956 or '57, thereabouts.

I called him the next day. I said, "I didn't intend to be discourteous or anything; sure I want to meet you, but I didn't think it was a good idea for us to meet at the Tropics." I said that we'd had all kinds of battles down here, and the ILWU was still having plenty of them and we are lining up with what you're trying to do. There were all of these preliminary moves going on within the Teamsters Union, which had its own system of manoeuvering; Beck had been indicted in Seattle. I forget what the . . . .

Ward: Income tax, wasn't it?

LG: Income tax and something about having sold something which had been entrusted to him and pocketing the money. It would seem sort of startling in view of the kind of salary he was paid. Anyway, Beck was still president of the Teamsters Union.

Ward: But he wasn't present down there?

LG: Yes, sure, he was there - he was presiding at the executive council meeting. Periodically, they move around; very common for them to rotate those meetings in different parts of the country.

So I said, "There really wasn't any offense meant; I want to see you because I think we have a lot to talk about." He said, "Sure, let's get together. It might not be a good idea for you to come to the Royal, why don't you go over there. It might have been the Princess Kaiulani across the street. Harold Gibbons has a suite there; I'll meet you there." So, we set up a date for lunch and we had an interesting few hours, just kicking the gong around, talking. Harold at first was there; Harold is . . .

Ward: Harold?

LG: Harold Gibbons is a person all of his own. He's still on the executive council of the Teamsters Union. He was the head of the big St. Louis local. Harold, I believe, at one time was a Socialist, together with some other people who at that time were in the Retail and Wholesale Employees Union (Wolchok's outfit).

I know that Larry Steinberg was one of those, and they decided to throw their lot in with the Teamsters. The amount of progress they made in the other direction didn't amount to much. Harold was bright; he later became head of the (Teamsters') Central States Conference. Recently, I think his work has been pretty much confined to executive board member; I'm not sure that he's in charge of any of the other major enterprises right now.

Harold had had some clashes with our union, particularly with Bob Robertson in the city of St. Louis, primarily in a place called Rice Warehouse. Harold used to say it was the toughest damn fight he'd ever been in - he didn't know what the hell held the ILWU up, because apparently he had the whole city organized against us, hammering in every direction. Our thing just had to fold, so he had a lot of grudging respect for our union.

He knew who I was and I knew who he was, of course, having spent some time in St. Louis. He was doing quite a bit of needling, at first. Hoffa finally turned to him and said, "You know, Hal, I'd like to hear what this fellow has to say; after all, they've done quite a job here in Hawaii. I'd like to know how they put those sugar plantations together and things like that."

Obviously, Hoffa was pretty well versed on what had gone on in the Islands and the unions there. He knew that the only major viable organization at that time was the ILWU. Later on there were the Public Workers, and the Hotel Workers grew up; but in terms of a tough, fighting outfit that had broken the grip of feudalism, it was the ILWU. He was quite curious about it. Well, I went into a lot of the background, the whole structure of the Islands, the economic picture, some of the problems he would have.

LG: Also, I told him that any battle between the Teamsters and the ILWU down in Hawaii didn't make a damn bit of sense; the only people who would profit would be the employers.

We didn't want any of his teamsters, particularly in Honolulu. On the outside islands, yes, that's different because certain problems caused by mechanization were coming up in sugar; workers would be looking for other jobs and they would figure they had first dibs on them and wouldn't give up without a struggle. Anyway, I think he understood those things; but it was a good session. I saw him after that . . .

Ward: Let me ask you at this time, was there any contact between him and Harry Bridges?

LG: Not at that time - later on.

Ward: You were the first, then, - you were the first ILWU leadership to contact Hoffa?

LG: Yes, I was the first. But - oh, Harry later got to see a good deal of Jimmy and did a lot of talking with him, particularly during the time when Jimmy was really being pushed around.

You have to remember that after Kennedy was elected, Bobby Kennedy became Attorney General, and then he did something that is almost unheard of. He had a special task force whose sole purpose was to get Hoffa; they had to find something on him to put him away.

Ward: There was something going on though before that. Before John Kennedy was elected President, hadn't relations started between ILWU and Hoffa?

LG: Yes.

Ward: And Bobby Kennedy came out here and went to the bank which was patronized by Gladstein - (the ILWU law firm) - and demanded to see Gladstein's personal account. The bank officials asked for a court order. Kennedy said, "I don't need a court order." "Well, who are you?" "I'm Robert Kennedy, that's who I am." They said, "That's all right, sorry, Mr. Kennedy." And he wasn't even attorney-general at that time!

LG: No, he was not attorney general then; he must have done that as counsel for the McClellan Committee. As a matter of fact, Bobby Kennedy had an unbelievable amount of chutzpah; there was no end to his brass.

I'm not sure what year Hoffa was elected president of the Teamsters Union.

Ward: Well, does that matter particularly?

LG: I'll tell you why. I had seen Jimmy Hoffa a couple of times on some other matters; I believe by that time he had been elected president of the Teamsters Union. There had been a suit filed against the Teamsters Union by a so-called "rank and file" group, primarily in New York. This was really a self-appointed group, working in league with a notorious redbaiter, an attorney named Godfrey Schmidt. He's the one who put out a book called Red Channels, a blacklist of actors, radio and television performers.

Ward: Yes, I've heard of that book.

LG: All kinds of wonderful people, you know, were just run out of their jobs - Jack Gilford, Zero Mostel, endless numbers, particularly during the McCarthy days.

I recall, somewhere about the time they were just beginning to struggle back, meeting Jack Gilford. I forget what thing he was in; it might have been "A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum". He suggested I come by his house; they were having some sort of a party. I think it was his wife's birthday and it was a very pleasant affair. His wife used to work on radio imitating children's voices. She got blacklisted. Imagine how subversive that is, imitating childrens' voices!

So, this was the sort of thing Godfrey Schmidt specialized in; he had a hammer lock on these people. His whole idea was that he had them half scared to death. I think he shook down all kinds of producers, maybe not in the method of a guy walking around and saying, "Pay off or else the place won't be here tomorrow", but in his own way he'd get these people to contribute. I think he even put out a little bulletin as to what was going on in the theatrical scene in New York.

Ward: What handle did he have with this group pursuing Hoffa?

LG: He became their attorney. The charges were a whole melange of things - illegal election and so forth.

I recall sending a memo back to Jimmy by way of Art Rutledge, right after Jimmy was elected. This suit was still going on. I said, "Why don't you make a straight proposition to Schmidt and to Bobby Kennedy that you are prepared to call a special convention of the Teamsters; let them all say their piece; then conduct a referendum vote as to whether or not you stay in office."

Of course, he would have won hands down, overwhelmingly. Jimmy commanded the respect of the men. Another thing, he knew his contracts; he really had no fear of the employers.

I'll admit he also had certain reckless aspects to his character. If going to this point from that point in a straight line was perfectly safe, I doubt he would have gone that way; if there were another route that went along the precipice, he would take the circular route along that precipice. Living a bit on the dangerous side was a part of him. Incidentally . . .

Ward: He did it once too often?

LG: Probably; there's no indication that he's around and less indication that they'll ever find him. But he also had a wonderful contempt for the employers - he didn't think they were all that tough; he felt that they had a soft underbelly and couldn't take a fight; he was smart.

He used to say, "These guys think we're going to tie up the whole trucking industry all over the country; let them think it - I don't care. If that makes them a bit frightened, no harm done. You think I'd do that? I'm not crazy. That would give them too much of a handle; we'll just take them a piece at a time."

He had that kind of power. He was the first to put together a national contract. He had the power to pull the employers together, because they either

LG: went for a program like that - even if it might cost a few more bucks - or they ran the risk of being picked off, just as he said he would. No question about it, when he said things like that he was sincere. I don't think Hoffa bluffed.

Anyway, Godfrey Schmidt was the representative of this so-called group. I can't recall their specific charges - something about an illegal convention, some of the delegates weren't elected properly; vague charges all put together.

Some of them, I suppose, were true; that happens with every union or big organization. I'm sure that if you question the elections that took place prior to a PTA convention you'd find that some of them weren't exactly in keeping with their by-laws.

One of the results was that they held up Hoffa's taking office as president. The compromise finally offered, I guess by the court or through Godfrey Schmidt, was that he could take the office of president if there were a group of monitors set up to supervise the affairs of the union. I guess Hoffa figured what the hell can they do? Everybody else was bothered a lot about it except Hoffa; he didn't give a damn. He knew perfectly well that the whole machinery of the union could operate effectively whether those guys were there or not.

He also felt very strongly that they had nothing to hide. Sure, the average guy in our union, if he saw some of the expense accounts of some of those officials, wouldn't be very happy; but on the other hand those expense accounts were within the constitution of their union, no question.

They weren't going to find any peculations; somebody rifling the cash register, or anything of that sort. Later on, with all their charges against the Teamsters, they couldn't show that sort of thing.

It had to be something else, namely, certain types of investment. The important thing here is that I was in San Francisco; by that time I knew Hoffa and we were on a good talking relationship where I could call him. I got a call from Herb Resner (who, after the Mooney case, became a member of the ILWU law firm); Bartley Crum (an attorney who had gotten his start in San Francisco) was in town.

LG: Herb said, "Bart would like to talk to you; can you have dinner?" I said, "Sure," and we went down and had dinner someplace, either the Poodle Dog or the Fly Trap. Bart's story was quite simple. Godfrey Schmidt, as a result of this litigation, had submitted a bill to the Teamsters Union in excess of $200,000.

Ward: Attorney's fees?

LG: Attorney's fees, I guess. I think this was in addition to what he was picking up as a monitor; he'd make these regular trips to Washington. Godfrey Schmidt had hired Bartley Crum to try to collect this fee. That's the background on this McClellan Committee hearing.

Ward: What a strange position . . . ?

LG: A strange position for Bartley Crum. As a matter of fact, I knew Bartley Crum back in the thirties when he was in John Francis Neylan's office; the conservative if not reactionary lawyer whose claim to fame -

Ward: General counsel for the Hearst press!

LG: Right, but he had also defended Anita Whitney against the Criminal Syndicalism Act. I met John Francis Neylan during that time. This is about the only thing he wanted to talk about; not the rest of it, because he was also representing Safeway. As a result of that meeting I met Navy Bill Ingram from Cal (the University of California).

But I had known Bart Crum, who used to move in progressive circles here. He wrote this book on Israel called Behind The Silken Curtain. That was after the 1948 war of independence in Israel. I always considered Bart a very friendly, pleasant guy.

Well, Bartley Crum's position, at least in regard to Hoffa, was really quite simple. Crum said that Godfrey Schmidt had retained him to collect his fee. Crum said I should know his position on things like monitors or court interference in unions; he didn't believe in it, very bad. He thought the best thing to do was to have the thing paid off, and maybe the monitors would go away.

LG: Well, I was skeptical about the whole thing. I knew a bit about Godfrey Schmidt. I trusted Bart Crum. I didn't see how he could get mixed up in anything peculiar, but the thing that went through my head and kept going through, at that session - and later on as I pursued it - was Godfrey Schmidt using Bartley Crum the way he was using everybody else; that he was trying to double cross him too, or to put the whole thing together as another big Communist Red plot.

Of course that would give Schmidt just the headlines he wanted - Communists and racketeers; Communism and corruption. Communism by itself wasn't enough, because here you had the AFofL going hell-bent-for-election on the issue of corruption. That puzzled me.

I told Bart Crum - he wanted to know if I could talk to Hoffa - "Sure, that was no problem, but I'm not going to talk to Hoffa unless I know where you're going to go and what you're trying to do. I'm not so concerned about you as I am about Schmidt because this man is a most unsavory character."

Bart Crum never had a kind word to say about Schmidt - he was very careful about that - or if he did, he didn't say it to me. Anyway, Bart Crum kept in touch with me and I said, "My feeling is that Hoffa's reaction would be that all this guy is trying to do is to collect a hunk of change. I don't think Hoffa would trust him as far as he could see him. I wouldn't and I don't think anybody else would."

I said, "It's up to you; I'm not anxious to get mixed up in something like this. I'm prepared to talk to Hoffa if you can't talk to him yourself, which I would be in favor of. Just go talk to him."

"Well,"he says, "There's no use - Hoffa would just refer me to his lawyers." By that time, Hoffa had a whole staff of lawyers around him, on the Bobby Kennedy issue and on the monitors and what have you. The lawyers were having a field day. They were practically living at the Teamster building there. I guess the cost of these things doesn't make that much difference - they're a very wealthy union, you know.

Ward: Yes, the $200,000 was not such a terrible thing.

LG: I think to them $200,000 would have been chicken feed; it would have been very small, compared to the kind of dough they put out in every direction. Let me go upstairs and look for something . . . (Goldblatt disappears briefly, returning with a telegram in his hand.) This is a wire that I got in 1959 . . . .

Ward: This is addressed to the ILWU, signed by Bartley Crum. It says, "Dear Louie: Important that Schmidt's fees as monitor be paid if plans to go forward. Have you contacted Hoffa? . . . . Bartley Crum" I didn't notice the date.

LG: It's 6-19-59.

Ward: All I can make out of it is "19". Okay, it's 6-19-59. What happened prior to this?

LG: I talked to Jimmy about it and he was very skeptical about Schmidt, naturally. He figured the whole case in the first place had been contrived; that Schmidt was just riding the coat tails of . . . .

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Ward: We left off talking about the coattails of Bobby Kennedy.

LG: Right. I made it clear to Bartley Crum that I had talked to Jimmy about this: "I wouldn't say there was no interest; but he has no way of knowing what's going to happen other than that Godfrey Schmidt is going to pick up a great big hunk of money, something close to a quarter of a million dollars, and the net result will be that he'll be right there and things will be as bad as ever."

They had three monitors - one, I think, was designated by the union; an attorney; one was designated by the plaintiffs who brought the suit; that was Godfrey Schmidt. There was a third. While life was not untenable for Hoffa, he was managing; obviously he would like to have them off his back.

LG: I told Bart that. I said, "I don't think you're going to get very far." And Bart said, "As I told you when we first met, I'm opposed to this outside interference within unions. I think I can work something out where Godfrey Schmidt's fee is paid; he will pull out as monitor and I will take his place." Well, of course, that was an entirely different kettle of fish, if it could be made to stick. That was the problem. I said, "Okay, I'll talk to Hoffa again;" Hoffa indicated that if that's going to happen, that's another story.

Ward: Substituting Crum for Schmidt?

LG: Or Schmidt getting out of it, at least. I asked Hoffa, "What do you think of Bartley Crum?" "I think he's a pretty decent guy; I've always liked him; chances are that he'll follow a policy of the least interference is the best interference." So, I think the thing could have jelled, and that explains this wire. In other words, at that point Crum was moving very quickly trying to get the thing wrapped up.

Ward: It's odd that he would have used the wire instead of the telephone.

LG: Yep. I don't know, maybe it had something to do with what happened later, but I doubt it. Well, all this was 6/19, 1959; and then July 3, I get a wire that I had been subpoenaed by the McClellan Committee for Friday, July 10.

In between that time, I met with one of the guys who was one of their plaintiffs; he struck me as someone who was completely on the make; how to make a buck, that's all. He had as much interest in trying to clean up that or any other union as the man in the moon. And why Bart wanted me to meet with him, I have no idea. Maybe it was to show me that he was still active.

In response to this wire, I went east for the hearing. I talked to Bart Crum: "If you can make the thing stick, all right - I think you have something going; you can set up a session with Hoffa." I had talked to Jimmy and he said, "Sure, if he wants to come down here and talk, fine." Next thing I knew, I got the subpoena. I went before the McClellan Committee.

LG: I had met with Bart; we had breakfast together. He said, "I think this whole thing is off. Let's forget it." I said, "Fine."

Ward: Did he give you any reason why it was off?

LG: No, he was very, very nervous - extremely; he seemed to be completely out of sorts. The conclusion I reached was that Godfrey Schmidt had given him the business, too. Might have used him as much as he could. It could be that Bart Crum's idea was only Bart Crum's and that he simply assumed that Godfrey Schmidt was accepting it; and nothing of the sort was about to happen.

The Kennedy Brothers

LG: To get back before the McClellan Committee; that was the time I told you I met with Senator John Kennedy.

Ward: He had an interest in the Hawaii election that was coming up at that time?

LG: Yes, because he was a close friend of Jack Burns -

Ward: Kennedy was?

LG: Yes, Jack Burns was the delegate who fought for statehood and made the big gamble; his political career was on the line. He decided to let Alaska go first, even though Hawaii had a larger population and a much more thorough-going record in fighting for statehood; but there was all this hostility about the population composition. He said to let Alaska go first; then there's no way for the Congress to turn us down. He won the gamble and an election had been ordered in Hawaii. Jack Burns should have won in a walk. The Republicans threw a rather popular and able campaigner - (William F.) Quinn was his name - into the race and for some reason the thing looked closer and closer . . . .

Ward: There was a lot of redbaiting going on too, wasn't there?

LG: Yes, a lot of redbaiting going on against the ILWU and Jack Hall, but it rubbed off on Burns. Burns appeared at the ILWU convention in 1959, end of April or early May. He was one of our principal speakers; and Burns was always a very courageous man. Whatever he thought, he said. He said that the organization that was entitled to the principal credit for breaking the back of feudalism in Hawaii was the ILWU. Of course, this was picked up by the employers and they made a hey-day out of it because everybody in town knew that Burns was a good friend of Jack Hall's, and had been for a number of years.

My feeling was that, in view of the situation there, all they needed was some big headline about Hoffa, Bridges, Hall and Goldblatt in one cabal to take over Hawaii, and they would definitely use this in the election; that's the reason I met Kennedy. I told the Senator, "Frankly, I think it is a terrible disfavor to Jack Burns; he's a good man. I'm not trying to duck this committee. I merely suggest you defer my hearing for about two weeks."

Ward: Till after the election?

LG: Until after the election, yes; it was two weeks away, as I recall. Hawaii was all revved up for the election; they finally had gotten statehood; for the first time they were electing their own governor. I said, "I'll be back here; there will be a telegram to the committee. The longshore negotiations are going on, and it will be perfectly plain that my time might be better spent in negotiations right now; and I'll be back."

Not that I felt all that jubilant in going before that committee or any other because, believe me, all committees are alike. When you got into one of those committee hearings, just hang onto your balls and hope that when you got out, they're still intact. That's the best you can do; if you come out a draw, you are a winner; that ain't no place for any of us. It's not our forum.

So John Kennedy said he'd talk to Bobby Kennedy and Bobby Kennedy, I heard, would see me the next morning, the day before the hearing. I went by there together with Jeff Kibre, our man in Washington at the time. That was a very abrasive session.

LG: Bobby Kennedy said, "Well, we think you ought to talk to the committee and tell us whatever you know." I said, "About what?" "Well, about your union, the Teamsters and so forth." I figured there was just no purpose getting into that kind of a conversation with him. I said, "You know perfectly well that our union is clean as a whistle - there can't be any of these charges that you are talking about in the case of other unions. You know that."

He said, "Yes, I know that; it has nothing to do with the case." I said, "We don't belong before this committee - that's all. My request is very simple; I'll be back here; I think you have a telegram." "Yes, I have." And I said, "My time would be better spent in those negotiations right now. I'll be back in a couple of weeks."

He said, "Well, I'd like to find out from you first how close are your relations with Hoffa?" "We get along very well, we talk to him; trade union relations. After all, we have a lot of interests in common, namely, warehouse, and if we can patch up our relations there and do a joint job, we'll be doing very well."

In 1957 we initiated the first moves for cooperation with the Northern California Teamsters; that's a story by itself -

Ward: Local 860 and Local 6 -

LG: 860, Local 6, Local 315 across the Bay, Local 12, Local 655, Sacramento, San Francisco; the beginning of the Northern California Warehouse Council.

Ward: Let's get back to Bobby Kennedy.

LG: Okay, except we'll get back to this 1957 thing another time.

Ward: Bobby had just asked you what were your relations with Hoffa.

LG: I told him and he said, "No - no, I want to know more than that. What do you know about all these legal troubles he's in and so forth." I said, "Just what I read in the paper." He said, "Do you know Bart Crum?" I said, "Sure, I know Bart Crum; I've known him for a long time." He says, "What have you been talking to Bart Crum about?"

LG: Some bells began to ring; I said, "That's a matter of a relation between a man and a lawyer - a personal relationship. If you ask what I've been talking to Bartley Crum about, you ask Bartley Crum." He said, "Why don't you cut out that shit?" Just like that. Well, that obviously was the end of the conversation. No deferment of the hearing. More important . . .

Ward: And Burns got defeated by 5,000 votes.

LG: As I recall that was the margin; thanks to the Kennedy brothers, yes.

Ward: Later on, he made it.

LG: Oh, yeah. Sure. He was elected maybe three times.

Ward: Is he still alive?

LG: No. Burns died around four years ago. He died of cancer. Died on the Big Island.

Ward: Well, what happened at the hearing?

LG: Okay, that gives a background to the hearing; all the backwards and forwards and the other crap that was floating around. These things are very, very distasteful, and to say you're not scared is a lot of bullshit. And then you are likely to get into a fight, like I did at the un-American Activities Committee. But at least in this one, I kept my cool. And they were going round and round on different questions and some of them I answered.

They hadn't gotten to the questions that dealt with the internal workings of the union. Then, all of a sudden, I think it was Bobby Kennedy who asked the question, "Do you know Bartley Crum?" I said, "Yes." "I'd like to know about your conversation with him." All of a sudden everything added together in my mind. If you put one light on the thing which Godfrey Schmidt, I am sure, would have done, it would have been tampering with the courts. The monitors were court-appointed.

The position that Hoffa took - and I agree with it 100 percent - was, what good was it paying this fee if the son of a gun was going to stay in there? I'm sure the coloration Godfrey Schmidt would have put on

LG: the thing would have been exactly that it was a try to bribe him to get out. Here was this upstanding citizen, court-appointed, doing his best to clean up the union and collecting his per diem and everything else. And along come these Machiavellian characters in the ILWU and the Teamsters trying to bribe him. Pay him off, get out.

I immediately decided this was the end of this hearing. I didn't need an attorney to tell me that. So, I decided to clam up and said, "That's a relationship between lawyer and client. I don't plan to answer that." Then, they started on the usual questions: are you a member of the Communist party, and so forth. I just fell back on the Fifth Amendment. No more questions - that was the end of the line.

It was after that, I went over to John L.'s (Lewis) office to say, "hello." I usually stopped by to say "hello" to him when I was in Washington, D.C. He said, "By the way, I understand some other people have been trying to talk to you this morning." He had a teletype there: "Yes, here it is" - a news release, you know, had come over the wire.

I talked to him of trying to put something together with Jimmy Hoffa to put on a real push to organize the south. I knew Hoffa was very interested in doing that, "But it takes somebody like you, Mr. Lewis, to head the thing up; you're a man with prestige and what you've been able to do in the way of organizing the unorganized and the south is very ripe, long overdue."

Ward: What did John say?

LG: Oh, he liked the idea, and of course he knew the value of flattery. He said, "Well, you don't use your head just to hang your hat on," or something like that, "but I'm afraid that little man has a lot of troubles ahead." John L. knew a lot of things that were going on.

When I got back to San Francisco the next day I picked up the paper; there's a story about my testifying before the McClellan Committee, and right after that was a long piece about Bartley Crum before the same committee.

LG: He didn't just sing; that man sang soprano, bass and everything in between. He sang like a whole chorus of canaries. The only really amusing bit about the whole damn thing was that he was so anxious to sing and so determined to give the committee anything it wanted that some of the Republicans sitting on the committee - (Roman) Hruska was one, isn't he that guy from Nebraska?

Ward: Yes, I think - sure, very conservative.

LG: A senator - yes, a very conservative guy; he took over the questioning of Bart Crum and realized very quickly that anything he asked Crum, he would answer "yes" to; so that the record becomes hilarious after a while.

Bart Crum goes into this whole business about the ILWU and the way we control Hawaii; of course, all the Hawaiian newspapers carried accounts of the hearing because the election was going on. The word got around very fast while this guy was on the stand. Bart Crum pictured the ILWU and its power, partly to give the impression that we could have put this whole monitor scheme together.

I don't know if he actually made the flat statement that he was offered the job as monitor, but in effect he implied that everything else they wanted to know was true. He didn't say point blank that there was an attempt to buy off Godfrey Schmidt to get him out as monitor, because that would have made him party to the whole thing, right? I don't know enough about the law, but he'd be at least an accessory or probably the principal conspirator. After all, he was the one who initiated all these goddam meetings in the first place.

The only conclusion I could come to afterwards was that he was reached by Bobby Kennedy and Schmidt turned Kennedy on to Bart Crum; they really gave him the business, and he just folded completely.

But Hruska saved the day for us in a crazy way when he went after Bart Crum. He said, "Well, does the ILWU control the Democratic party in Hawaii?" "Oh, yes, from top to bottom - complete control, just like they control the whole state - no question about it. They have everything organized just like in sugar and pineapple and everything else."

LG: "Well, if they're that powerful in Hawaii, do they also control the Republican party?" "Yes, certainly, the Republican party too!" (laughter) By that time, Hruska was just having fun and he didn't give a damn; Bart Crum, of course, looked like an utter fool. Anyway, the net result was that nothing came out of the hearing.

Ward: Except the job on your candidate?

LG: Yes, a smear job. I think it was a sad thing about Bart Crum, too. He had been a good egg. I know he ran into some difficulties with John Francis Neylan; then he went east. He went to work for one of the Roosevelt brothers' law firm and that didn't work out too well. About a month or so after the hearing he committed suicide. I think this is a good stopping point.

XIX IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH THE TEAMSTERS

(Interview 27: 19 September, 1978)

An Analysis of Jimmy Hoffa

Ward: Now, Lou, you said you'd like to talk about your relationship with the Teamsters.

LG: We wound up on the McClellan Committee with everybody on the committee figuring that Crum was a completely unguided missile.

It was a very hectic period with a great deal of travel, a great deal of conversation, a great many telephone calls. I got to see Jimmy Hoffa a good deal and I got to know him fairly well.

He was a different kind of a man; to simply try to slot him in with other labor officials, whether they be labor statesmen or politicians or guys on the make, would not be accurate. He was a typical American product; could just as easily have been a robber baron, but he was just a little bit late on the scene. I think he would have been completely at home with guys like Henry Morgan or John LaFitte. To him . . . .

Ward: Except he didn't have any money to start with.

LG: No, but I don't think it ever phased him particularly. He thought you did these things by sheer hard work, brute strength; he was a tough little guy. Not that he would go around fighting; he wasn't the kind of a guy that was always in a beef.

LG: A man in the rough section of Detroit organizing among people like the warehousemen couldn't grow up without getting to know some of the guys on the fringes of society. To think if you lived in that section of the world you spent your life at Sunday school picnics would be completely unrealistic.

I don't think he ever found these people necessarily disagreeable. I don't think he saw them as friends or allies - they were merely people he got along with. He probably knew early in life that you don't try to do a job as a union man and also keep up a running battle with these fellows, who played under a completely different set of rules. Neither did you ever get the impression that such men could claim Jimmy Hoffa as one of theirs. I am sure he was never part of any of their machines. I don't think he was a party to their operations.

Ward: You said he was of Polish derivation.

LG: Yes, Polish extraction - so is his wife, Josephine. I think he met and married his wife when she was part of a laundry workers strike, so they were of workingclass background. He lived a modest life.

Ward: He got a big salary, though?

LG: He got a big salary later on. I think he got a small salary when he was head of Local 299. He got a big salary later, yet he was never a gambler. You would never put him in the class of a high roller.

He had his own way of handling his personal finances. I went to dinner with him a number of times, and to lunches. I never saw him use a credit card. When the bill came along, he just pulled out a handful of bills and paid it. So, he operated out of his own pocket. I think, in part, it was a business of distrust of the whole Internal Revenue machinery; as far as he was concerned, the source of his money was none of their business. If he was getting money separate and apart from his regular salary I don't know; he might have.

A lot of things go on in the union movement that never completely surface. When people begin to achieve a good deal of strength and power in connection with, say, pension funds, the matter of whether somebody can

LG: get a handle on a pension fund becomes a very attractive thing. Hoffa would be a member of the pension trustees; he would not make a loan as such. The trustees would, I suppose, once they were approved by their auditors or financial wizards.

Sure there were all kinds of criticisms; the government has endless documents about what they call bad investments, and so forth. The simple truth of the matter - and this, of course, the newspapers don't carry - is that the pension funds are completely solvent. The returns on those funds are perfectly adequate and do better than most other funds. Now, maybe they lost a buck in a couple of real estate operations in Florida or something like that, I don't know.

But they have so many; these are huge funds. Whether this was any source of income to Hoffa, I doubt, because the way he lived didn't make that much difference. He didn't spend any time chasing women; he didn't drink.

Ward: Not at all?

LG: Nope, never saw him take a drink in my life. If he did, he might have had one at a dinner party.

Ward: Very unusual . . . .

LG: Very unusual; he had a work schedule that would kill a mule. Nothing for him to get started around 5:00 - 5:30 in the morning; he expected others to be there too, and just because somebody else wanted to stay out until two or three, that made no difference to him; goddamit, he'd be on deck. On that score he was a very tough taskmaster. He expected people to get paid.

I remember being there one time and Sid Zagri, their legislative representative came in; he was complaining. Sid spent a lot of time on the Hill and he enjoyed it; he liked meeting with the senators, lobbyists, representatives. He got around; that was part of his job. By the way, Sid Zagri and Jeff Kibre had been at UCLA at the same time.

Sid died - he was some place having dinner in one of these topside restaurants; fire broke out, the exits were either locked or something, and he was burned to death. Sid did a good job and worked hard. Nothing

LG: for Sid to get going in the morning around six and keep going until around one the next day. He was complaining that he ought to be paid more money; Jimmy finally turned around to him and said, "Look, we're not going to change the pay scales now. We can't do that man by man; it won't work out. Anyway, what the hell's the matter with you? Don't you know how to make out an expense sheet?" - and he let it go at that. That was the end of that conversation.

Nobody could call Jimmy a skinflint either. He wasn't tight-fisted. The man who had been secretary-treasurer of the union for many, many years was John English, a real oldline Teamster, tall, slim; at one time must have been a bull of a man; he was in charge of the finances, and they were in good shape.

He was also the man who made the most dramatic speech at the time of the Teamster expulsion; I mean the expulsion of the Teamsters by the AFofL, particularly on the record of the Teamsters as a loyal member. Hoffa and John English got along very well. John might have felt that some of the beefs Hoffa got into were expensive, but on the other hand the Teamsters were used to spending money, if they thought there were some results there; they had it and they didn't feel that they had to sit on it.

I got to know Jimmy; for one thing, he trusted me. He thought I would level with him and I did; never lied to him; the word would have seeped back. The mocassin telegraph inside the Teamsters union is far more effective than Western Union. Nothing much happens in that union without the word going around.

I learned a good deal about the Teamsters' structure. While their constitution is a highly centralized document with an enormous amount of power in the hands of the general president and the executive board, very little of it is really spelled out. The use of the referendum is a rarity; practically unknown.

On the other hand, there is an element in the Teamsters that is different from many other unions. It is tantamount to a form of syndicalist anarchy; while you have this centralization of structure, a lot of power in the hands of the International, a lot of power in the respective conferences . . . .

Ward: You mean regional?

LG: Well, there are four main conferences. There's the Eastern Teamster Conference, the Middlewest, Southern and the West. The West, I guess, is the biggest geographically; membershipwise, I guess about even-Steven with the central states - the Central States Conference; the South, not so big; the East, quite large. They were like baronies in some ways.

Part of this stems back to the general thinking of Dan Tobin of the Teamsters Union, the philosophy that the one requirement was that the locals pay their per capita on time and that beyond that they generally abide by the laws. Then again, within the Teamsters there was an enormous variation on how they operated.

Ward: Each barony did it more or less to suit itself?

LG: To suit itself; then the locals within them would not be uniform, necessarily, in the way they operated. You would find some locals where they had a heritage of progressive thinking. For example, Harold Gibbons and Larry Steinberg. Harold Gibbons went in for many, many things, not just ordinary things like credit unions; he built a very substantial housing project for senior citizens. The union there was neck deep in all kinds of civic affairs.

His friend, Larry Steinberg, was in charge of the Toledo local, Local No. 20; that was a very big local and they were a consolidated, merged local. Some of these locals were built strictly along craft lines; others were general locals. Steinberg's was a general local.

Hal Gibbons' was a general local; they would have teamsters and warehousemen. I think in the case of Larry Steinberg they had the Cadillac Hotel workers as part of his local; a very elaborate piece of machinery, scattered over a large area. There he depended in large part on a stewards' council which became a consultative assembly which he used periodically to bounce off ideas and get a feedback from the membership.

Larry and I became friends. I liked him very much; he was a character all of his own. He was born in the Soviet Union and came to this country at the age of 14.

LG: Larry became an assistant to Jimmy Hoffa when Hoffa went in, so that he worked out of the Washington office. When I was back there I always spent time with Larry Steinberg; talking to him, I learned a good deal about the structure, manner of functioning, and so forth.

Ward: Well, what was the linkage between the ILWU and the Teamsters?

LG: The actual linkage between the two outfits to begin with was zero; remember, the background was anything but pleasant. We had gone through some ugly fights.

Ward: Yes, but now you had this Hawaii first meeting with Hoffa and apparently you got along fairly well in discussion of what was going to happen and what was not going to happen in Hawaii?

LG: Yes, in terms of Hawaii, I think Hoffa accepted my appraisal of the Islands and what should be done at just about face value.

Ward: All right, how did the second meeting come about? And the third and fourth and so on?

LG: The meetings came about thereafter when he moved on towards the presidency. At that time the court was stepping in, the monitors were stepping in; then the Bart Crum thing broke; I had seen Hoffa, as I recall, once or twice, just by going east. I dropped by the Teamster headquarters, met Larry Steinberg and spent some time with him.

Hoffa was always cordial. They had a lunch room right there in the building and we had lunch together there, and he'd ask questions about the west coast and the ILWU. He was a very curious man with a very retentive memory. There were some other faculties about Jimmy Hoffa that floored the employers. I mean - he - -

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Ward: We were discussing how Hoffa had qualities that confused the employers.

LG: Oh, the employers were flabbergasted particularly when Hoffa began to move on what was one of his prime ambitions, namely, to pull together a national agreement

LG: covering particularly long haul trucking; the same peculiar empire structure that they had in the Teamsters reflected itself in these contracts. You would have one type of contract, let us say, for the drivers in the western region and another one in the central states, and so forth.

Hoffa's idea was 100 percent sound to try to pull the union together as an effective organization. Anyway, what the employers were flabbergasted about was that Jimmy would come into these negotiations actually better prepared, in terms of a genuine knowledge of the industry, than the employers themselves. He was a very quick reader, picked things up very fast and had a highly retentive memory; he met all the qualifications of competency. He wasn't a hack.

I mentioned several times that even during the worst days of our conflicts with the Teamsters, we made every effort to maintain a good relationship with the rank and file teamster. This paid off, because they never could really mount the kind of crusade where their membership took part. On the other hand, the hatred among some of our guys towards some of the teamsters just knew no bottom.

I'll never forget a session we had at our house here when I had a whole group of our people; oh, George Valter was here, Curt McClain, (who later became secretary-treasurer of the International), Paul Heide, Chili; I raised this question that the time had come for us to move for an effective working alliance with the Teamsters.

George, who could get pretty angry, was literally storming around the garden here like a bull; oh, screaming, he was so angry; "The son-of-a-bitching bastards; now is the time to raid them." He yelled, "They're staggering around, they don't know where the hell they're going; let's finish them off."

He was so hot, so angry; all the years of struggle, the terrible beatings, the fist fights on the picket lines, the undercutting, the double-crossing and everything; it just sort of welled up. So it was not an easy thing with our own people. Actually, it was easier when it came to handling some of the Teamsters.

An Interesting Phone Call

LG: Well, I go back into some of these things because they fall together. As a beginning, it was in 1957 the Teamster contract was open, and they had a provision in their contract whereby if they could not reach an agreement by a certain date, the issue would automatically be settled by arbitration; that was the wage issue; it was open on wages only.

The Local 6 contract was also open. However, the Local 6 contract did not have a provision for arbitration; in the event of a deadlock we had the right to strike. We had climbed out of that period of scrambling for our lives in some of the agreements we had to make in 1951 and '53; we were in better shape. I got a call from Joe Dillon.

Ward: Oh, yes.

LG: One of the guys that had gone over the hill. Later on we found out that he was one of those who tried to put together this raid on Local 6 which turned out to be a bust. He said he wanted to have lunch with me. I didn't know what it was all about, but I saw no reason why not. He didn't want to eat downtown where we'd run into anybody; that's the usual business - these guys with the red horrors.

He wanted to meet at Julius' Castle (a famous restaurant on Telegraph Hill) - not too early. So I met him at Julius' Castle around 1:30. We spent, I guess, two, two and a half hours, a lot of it just the usual bullshit, going round and round reviewing old times, and in most cases lying about it; and finally we got down to the issue.

I said, "What's it all about?" He said, "Your contract is open and so is ours, you know, on arbitration." I said, "We don't think you're going to do too good on arbitration. I've seen what the arbitration decisions are around here and the kind of figures the employers are using. They're using the standard cost of living jazz, etc., etc., and once those standards are set out in a single arbitration those same figures are picked up by each guy and used the same way, with variations and permutations."

LG: So, I said, "Let's just have one agreement, and if we can make this thing stick, we'll see what we can do later; nothing else. I don't want to see you guys go to arbitration." He says, "Well, how do we do that? The agreement is plain; it says we gotta go to arbitration."

I said, "One of the things that can always be done in an arbitration, or with any hearing, is to find ways and means of not having it; not having it because you can't get around to having it. There's no reason why Ted White of Local 860 can't take off; he's under the weather, he likes to play golf, and there are all kinds of places he can go. You should disappear for a while; the other officials should be instructed they are not empowered to handle any of these things - Ted White is the only guy in charge."

I said, "Just make sure that there's no arbitration, that's all. We'll go into our negotiations at once; we're going to take a strike if we have to, and I'm convinced we can get more; nobody will get less. If worst comes to worst, we'll settle for what I know you're going to get anyway, which will be six cents. No reason why we can't give it a try. My hunch is that unless the employers can push you into arbitration, we're going to do better."

He thought about it for a long time. He knew it could be done, sure, because that's no big deal; if you have an arbitration due on October first, you get . . . .

Ward: Put it up a month?

LG: Yes. Then a day later you find out the man who is supposed to handle your arbitration calls you up and says, "Sorry, it's impossible; there's another case I've taken and I don't know when you'll be ready." So, that's another three weeks and you just screw around and buy time; they did buy time. It never went to arbitration. We went into negotiations and picked up 15 cents.

Of course, as far as the Teamsters were concerned, this was just manna from heaven. They couldn't have gotten a nicer gift. There was no arbitration, no cost involved, and they just picked up 15 cents.

LG: As far as they were concerned they just went back and reported to their membership that they did it. That's okay - no great problem.

When Dillon accomplished this, he took an enormous amount of personal pride in putting this thing together; this stroke of brilliance in sitting down with the devil of the opposition - I was always in that class - and that I was the guy who figured out these things and that's the reason they were having troubles, etc., etc. The usual bullshit people develop because the invention of devils is terribly important in this world.

After this came about, Dillon suggested a few of us ought to get together. I said, "That's fair enough - the contract will be open in another year and it will be open on a lot more things than wages." So, we began a series of meetings; some of the guys who were brought in were pretty good union guys, like Frankie Farro from Local 853, the east side of the bay, Alameda county.

Ward: The big locals on the other side of the bay are - or were - 70 and 315?

LG: No, local 70 is the drivers local in the east bay; by the way, it has a long record of being a rebellious local. That is the local where Cliff Lester was elected.

Ward: It was taken over after Charlie Real (former leader of local 70) got into trouble.

LG: Charlie Real got into trouble, and Cliff Lester took it over and Cliff Lester was heaved out with the help of the International. We were up to our ears in that fight. Cliff was a good friend of ours. As a matter of fact, we had big demonstrations down there because Cliff Lester thought they were going to move in with a lot of guys and dump him.

But Cliff Lester didn't hang on. He still had a long, rebellious background. It's still one of the locals where they elect the business agents - in some of the Teamster locals, the secretary treasurer is the key official and he appoints the business agents; Local 70 was different, and come election time that

LG: street along Hegenberger Road (in Oakland) where their headquarters are gets to be a lively place with stickers and signs; it's like a typical political election.

Anyway, Local 70 was a separate local. Our relations with them by and large were good, but they were not the warehouse local. Local 315 was a mixed local of warehousemen, teamsters and everything else - a miscellaneous local; their base is Contra Costa (county); local 853 is confined to Alameda county.

Ward: Is that a miscellaneous local also?

LG: Warehouse local, a good sized local. From that we started this larger series of meetings which brought in a good many of the Teamster locals around here. Dillon was very anxious to be part of it. Local 853 was in there, Local 860. Ted White was still there. Mark O'Reilly of 860 was an excellent ally and supporter. Local 315 got in the act with guys like Vince Aloise, a good man there. Fred Hoffman was in charge of Local 287 down in San Jose; they sort of rode along, doing a good job, sometimes playing their own game. And a Teamster local from Vallejo.

All of them got in the act because they felt nothing could be lost and a good deal to be gained. The membership in the warehouse field was almost evenly divided between ILWU Locals 6 and 17, a total of somewhere between 11,000 or 12,000 members; the Teamsters had approximately the same number, so we were talking about some 25,000 members in Northern California. The jurisdiction stretched from Fresno, where there are some warehouse locals under a guy named (Harry) Kachadoorian, up to the Oregon border, including some places like Eureka.

This began to flourish into joint bargaining; it even developed into a complete set of rules. By that I mean we set up the Northern California Warehouse Council. The Northern California Warehouse Council was headed by George Mock, a vice-president of the Teamsters, headquartered in Sacramento. The local from which he came, Local 150, was a miscellaneous local including warehouse; they were part of the Northern California Warehouse Council.

LG: He was co-chairman together with myself. We were the co-chairmen of the Northern California Warehouse Council, which is still in existence to this day, starting from that first business of the 15-cents we picked up in place of arbitration.

After the negotiations got more complicated and more detailed, we also began to introduce strictly ILWU measures. At first the Teamsters were as jumpy as a cat on a hot tin roof because the idea never occurred to them; their contract negotiations were really quite simple. They would call a membership meeting, formulate their demands. Almost anything anybody wanted was thrown in there. The negotiating committee was invariably the same group; officers, and where necessary, the trustees; the basic structure of the Teamster local.

ILWU warehouse negotiations, of course, are quite different. Warehouse negotiations start off first with a long series of bull sessions; these are just informal meetings where members, stewards take part, contract differences are aired, members have a chance to give their own emphasis on what they think is most important.

Then there is an attempt to sort these things down; finally there is the Local 6 convention, attended by five to six hundred delegates, where the contract demands are finally formulated. Then the negotiating committee is elected by each division - these do not include the officers, they are in addition; an entirely different structure.

Also in the course of negotiations, step by step, the full committee - there might be the strategy committee, as it was generally called, because it also served as the strike committee when necessary - would get complete reports.

The teamsters would constantly make remarks, because we'd break up a meeting, say, at 7:30 at night with the employers; we'd have to skip dinner so as to make an 8:00 o'clock meeting to give our reports. So, they got to the point where they asked, "Don't you guys do anything but meet? You seem to be meeting all the time - you should be worn out." Of course the secret is - nothing terribly mysterious - keeping in constant contact with the membership so that if you do have to move, they'll know what the hell the fight is all about.

LG: In the case of the Teamsters, we decided the best thing we could do was to have a joint stewards meeting. The first joint stewards' meeting took place at Scottish Rite Auditorium; the hall was jam-packed; not just our own guys, but a tremendous turn-out from the Teamsters union. This was the first time that they had had meetings like this, where they would have this kind of an input and get a full report on what was going on.

We decided we would take joint strike votes; later on we not only took joint strike votes, we had a set of regulations that when you settled a contract, while the votes were taken separately in the locals, they'd all be pooled for the purposes of counting; a simple majority. You couldn't have just one local turning the thing down and the others going along. The machinery got perfected as it went along. The stewards' meetings were very stirring affairs.

Ward: How did you work out the chairing of those meetings and all that?

LG: Oh, we had George Mock handle the chair.

Ward: He cooperated pretty well with you fellows?

LG: Yes, as a matter of fact, extremely well. George Mock would then call on me for the report. They had to introduce every single one of the officials; some of them had something to say; most of the times, they didn't. Just a matter of George chairing the meeting and turning it over to me for the report; a certain number of questions from the floor.

The big thing that really came out was a powerful feeling of unity on the part of the members, a thing never to underestimate; the steam and power that comes out of the unification of a group of workers who have instinctively known for years that their fighting power really lies in sticking together; that they have artificially been kept apart, and all of a sudden it's there!

I forget if it was the next year or the year after, we went into joint negotiations and again a number of things got worked out, including some improvements we wanted on health and welfare. Some of the plans

LG: differed very sharply, so that you could not completely reconcile them. In the case of health and welfare you could fight for a certain amount of money.

In the case of pensions, their pension structure was different than ours. They did not go backward and forward on benefits. In those days, anytime the ILWU negotiated pension improvements, the people who were retired got the same increase as those who were going to retire. The Teamsters didn't do that. They began to do a little bit of that later on, primarily under our prodding.

In the case of health and welfare they had some sort of contract language which included - as the spokesman of the San Francisco Employers Council, Murray Parker, used to say - "to maintain the benefits". In other words, they would guarantee the benefits during the life of the contract, BUT the benefits were not so hot.

It was several years before they offered their members a choice of the Kaiser (preventive medicine and hospital coverage) Plan, as well as the insured plan. They were completely sold on the insured plan because of their own thinking, or because they were taking their advice from their insurance agent. Some of them might have believed that Kaiser was a form of socialism.

Ward: That was not an uncommon thought.

LG: Yes. I spoke very openly about the advantages of Kaiser. I said, "Why have a pain in the ass? We don't have these bothers with health and welfare. If somebody doesn't like Kaiser, we say that's fine; at the end of the year, switch to the insured plan. If somebody says that the insured plan is lousy, doesn't take care of my kids, we say you picked it; so at the end of the year, switch back to Kaiser.

"Why the hell should I go fighting somebody, telling our members the insured plan is better, or Kaiser is better. I give them the plans and say, 'Go talk to your friends, talk to your wife; think it over, you have plenty of time. You have a month's notice before you make your choice; go ahead and make your pick.' That makes a lot more sense." Finally, they got around to it, but not in a very encouraging way.

LG: Different unions work differently and think differently; it piles up over the years. One of the first things we did was to insist on trying to get some health and welfare for the pensioner. Initially we got a penny an hour, which made a sufficient fund to buy - not exactly the same Kaiser coverage as the regular coverage - a special coverage that Kaiser was cooperative enough to work out.

It had some sort of co-payment; didn't cover the whole family, but did cover the pensioner; it was a step forward. Later on, of course, we had to keep getting more and more money for it. Now I think it's 3-½ cents an hour, maybe more.

Ward: What do you mean, 3-½ cents an hour? The total hours the man had worked or what?

LG: So many cents an hour for the total hours worked in the industry by everybody. In other words, if you had 10,000 people and they were all working 2,000 hours a year, then you'd have a penny for 10,000 times 2,000; that would be the number of pennies. It makes a tidy sum, and we were able to buy some benefits for the pensioners. One of the things I wanted to equalize, and for which we got agreement from the Teamsters was this pension question because they finally realized it was a two-way street. They said, "Okay we'll go for it," and we finally won it.

Frankie Farro (a Teamster official) was an interesting old curmudgeon with a bit of a sense of humor; we finally wound up on that item and we went out for a cup of coffee. Frank was deep in thought for a while; finally he turned to me and said, "You know, Lou, I know we got that penny or whatever it is for the pensioners. I'm trying to figure out what the hell I'd do with it."

I said, "Well, it's to buy health and welfare for the pensioners." He says, "You know, in my case, the number of pensioners I've got, I think I can buy each of them a Cadillac." I said, "How come?" "We've got around 200 pensioners in the local; something like that, maybe less." Well, here was a local of about 4500 people, maybe 5,000, with only that number of pensioners. You suddenly realize what the whole background of his union is compared to ours.

LG: One of the things the Teamsters had offered the employers over the years - the thing that has made the Teamsters so attractive to employers - was free and easy discharge. When a man began to push something like 50, he sure as hell is not going to cut the buck like a kid out of high school - nothing but piss and vinegar!

Pretty soon the older guy was out with nothing much to protect him, so that the ratio of pensioners compared to the membership of his local, oh, must have been better than 10 or 15 to one. We had a very high proportion of pensioners; people of Local 6 stayed with Local 6. Local 6 provided them with the kind of security where they could stay on the job, work out their years, and pick up a pension. Quite a difference!

Later on some of these things had to come out at Local 6 conventions when it became even more clear that the Teamsters were able to get things because it was cheap to the employers. The employers, of course, at all times were trying to find ways and means to disrupt this coalition; some of it had a bit of an effect; at one point, almost a disastrous impact, but we managed to get over it.

I'm covering negotiations that went on over a long period of time; they didn't all happen at once. There was one set of negotiations which led to a brief strike, around three weeks. One reason the thing fell apart was on the question of health and welfare - -

Ward: That was a joint strike?

LG: Yes. It was the first joint strike in the history of the industry. It also turned out to be the first strike that any of these Teamster locals had ever been mixed up in, over all these years.

Ward: They never had a strike?

LG: Why did they have to? They had somebody else doing the striking for them. It was the kind of a strike where we were all geared up, ready. One of the essentials of a strike is to make sure you get your doughnut wagons around, just for the good will and the morale; somebody having the pickets move around from line to line to say "hello"; and, of course, putting out bulletins every day.

LG: It got to the point where we found out we had to print more and more bulletins. As soon as the bulletins were put out to the warehouses, some of the Teamsters' warehouse guys would be over to pick up some. They never got a word of information from their locals, which never geared up to even put out a bulletin during the strike. So the Local 6 bulletin was the official strike bulletin; we came out of that strike in good shape.

We also had to work out a different technique on the question of independent houses, something the Teamsters had never struggled with. Those negotiations were not predicated upon a basic struggle.

For example, in the warehouse industry there were a whole series of master contracts. There was the master contract with the Distributors Association, the principal outfit we dealt with; then the San Francisco Employers Council had a master contract that was primarily with Local 860, and a few other shops in the Teamsters Union.

The Peninsula employers had their so-called master contract; nobody ever could figure out what the hell that was. The United Employers had a half-assed master contract with Local 853; and then there was a contract with plumbing supply houses, run by a man named Alec Hauften. He was a rather pleasant guy, but he sure didn't have any stomach for the kind of negotiations which hit a tough level. His was more the personal relationship sort of thing; labor relations of the shake-hands type.

Local 6 also had a large number of independent houses, houses that did not belong to our master contract. By and large, they maintained the same wage scales as the master contract and generally followed suit.

Well, the Teamsters for years, when they had these separate houses plus master negotiations, would simply let the independents sign what are called "me-too" contracts. In other words, the contract said, "Once the negotiations are completed with the other houses they would automatically sign the same thing."

We decided that this was just a free ride. In the event there was going to be a shut-down in the industry, I saw no reason why these independents should get off scot-free. They had to carry some of the load.

LG: The device we worked out in that case featured stipulations of a different kind. If an independent wanted to function after the strike deadline, - they did not automatically have to be struck, but they might be - they would have to sign a stipulation which granted certain provisions in excess of some of the demands in the master negotiations; additional items such as an extra holiday with pay, perhaps some additional sick leave, a higher shift differential. We put in some higher wages, subject to renegotiation when the strike was over. On the wage item . . . .

Ward: Except on the wage item?

LG: No, only on the wage item. The one thing we didn't want to live with afterwards was disparate wage scales. That would raise too much hell. But the fact that one warehouse had an extra holiday with pay, or extra sick leave or something else, we figured didn't mean a thing; the employer, let him pay that if he wanted to take a free ride. My position was that if every single employer joined the Association, we were better off.

Ward: You gave these independents an incentive to get into the Association?

LG: Right. If I could have kicked them into the Association - which you can't do - better yet. Well, this was so diametrically opposed to the Teamster thinking that it was very hard to get our ideas across to them. It eventually got across, primarily because it worked. That is the only mark, as far as they are concerned.

Ward: So, this pretty well establishes the Joint Council in Northern California, so far as warehouse is concerned. What relationship does this Northern California situation have to Hoffa and the negotiations that began between the International officers of both unions?

LG: Insofar as Hoffa was concerned, he became a strong supporter of the warehouse negotiations without any reservations.

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Ward: You were saying, Lou, that Hoffa was a strong supporter of the warehouse operation in Northern California -

LG: Oh, yes. Einar Mohn also became a strong supporter of the Northern California Council -

Ward: He was the head of the Western Conference?

LG: Yes. He became very friendly; his office was always open to me. I used to spend a fair amount of time talking to him, having lunch. However, Einar Mohn didn't see eye to eye with Jimmy Hoffa; he was mixed up with too many different kinds of people - put it that way . . .

Ward: Was Einar Mohn a little more pure, might you say, than Hoffa?

LG: Einar Mohn was a labor statesman, and not in a disparaging sense. He was a well read man, had a better grasp of a lot of things than the average teamster. In many ways, he stood head and shoulders above them. He knew his industry quite well and was an excellent administrator. He had various divisional councils. The headquarters at Burlingame were very cleverly located.

He was constantly calling in the representatives of the various councils - Bakery Wagon Drivers, Milk Wagon Drivers, Over the Road drivers, warehousemen, you name it. The Burlingame headquarters were very close to the San Francisco Airport. It was quite simple for the members of a council to fly in of a morning, take a cab over to the Burlingame headquarters, hold their meetings and be back home the same evening. It was a well organized operation; he knew what he was doing.

I recall one session; the 1960 warehouse negotiations or '63 - thereabouts - we worked all night and finally wound up with a good agreement; Jimmy was in town. He called up and said, "How did you make out?" I said, "We came out fine. As a matter of fact, we're having a meeting this morning to go over the agreement, and I think it will be recommended by everybody - no problem."

LG: He said, "I'd like to come by there; where are you meeting?" I said, "Our headquarters, 150 Golden Gate." And bango! up he comes, bounces right up to 150 Golden Gate, delighted to meet everybody there. We let him talk to the council after the report was given; he was very flattering to the whole bunch and flattering to our union and to me. He knew where the work was getting done.

This did not make it easy all the time because the Teamsters, like any other big organization, has wheels within wheels. On another occasion we were in late negotiations - it must have been around 2:00 o'clock in the morning and we were still meeting. The deadline was the next morning; we had set a strike date after a joint strike vote at one of these big stewards' meetings at our longshore hall. It was hard to get large enough halls for these big stewards' meetings.

Somebody calls me out of negotiations, saying, "It's important; you have to take it." Jack Goldberger had been sitting in on the meeting; he was one of the personal representatives of Hoffa, but he also made his own judgments; he always considered himself to be sort of a kingpin in most situations.

Anyway, it was Jimmy Hoffa from the airport and he said, "I get some pretty discouraging reports about the negotiations; looks like they're going to break down. The report I get is that it really doesn't call for a breakdown and that there ought to be a settlement around." I said, "By and large you're right; I don't think there ought to be a breakdown - might be, you never can tell, but right now, I'd say the negotiations look all right. I think we have another couple of hours before this thing cracks; it's moving in the right direction, but not fast enough."

He says, "Well, how do you feel about it?" I said, "I think it's worthwhile going on - we can sweat it out. We're not looking for a strike; if we play this one to the hilt, we'll win it." Obviously he had been goosed into this call; he didn't get one of these reports by pulling it out of the air. Somebody had been bending his ear; these guys felt that any situation I was in had to be a strike, you see. After all, that was my nature.

Ward: They were scared?

LG: They never did get completely unscared, which is just as well. I said, "I think we'll manage okay, I'm not all that worried." "Well, I'm glad you feel that way," he said, "Just stay in there, fuck 'em." Sort of typical of Jimmy, you see. (laughter) He didn't have any fear of employers.

Ward: From what you've told us, one would never know that up to this point Harry had anything to do with the Teamsters and their International, or Hoffa.

LG: He didn't handle warehouse negotiations at all - except later on under rather disturbing circumstances. Warehouse negotiations were strictly between Locals 6 and 17 and the Teamsters; it was very much my responsibility. Harry was mixed up at the time primarily in Longshore and the beginning of his work on the mechanization agreement; that began in Portland. I didn't attend that caucus in 1957.

During these warehouse negotiations, Harry was kept posted; I told him where they stood, but he did not take an active part in them. The negotiations were between, initially, members of an informal committee - that's all it amounted to. Later on it became a joint committee, which still later matured into the Northern California Warehouse Council. The Northern California Warehouse Council later on got power-of-attorney from all the locals to negotiate jointly for all of them, ratification to take place jointly.

Ward: Well, let me ask you - Harry was informed as to what was going on in warehouse, but you used to sit in with him on important longshore negotiations. Were you still doing that in this period?

LG: I sat in on the longshore negotiations in 1961, the mechanization agreement, definitely, and got into a very sharp clash.

Ward: With whom? Harry?

LG: With Harry and Bodine. (Howard Bodine, an ILWU official).

While Harry didn't take part in the warehouse negotiations, he had his relations with Jimmy Hoffa. He had seen him a number of times . . .

Ward: When did that begin? Sometime after you first met Hoffa?

LG: Yes. Harry spent a good deal of time with Hoffa, particularly when Hoffa was being plagued by Bobby Kennedy; Kennedy became Attorney-General and they had the task force, and then the indictments against --

Ward: Did you introduce Harry to Hoffa?

LG: Not that I recall. The relations were pretty good. Harry would pick up the phone and call Jimmy . . . .

Ward: - it started some place?

LG: Yes, I suppose, somewhere along the line there -

Ward: But you don't have any feeling of having arranged the meeting?

LG: No. It might have been that I played a small role. Harry spent a good deal of time with Jimmy, trying to convince him that the right kind of a campaign against Bobby Kennedy was a mass campaign where he went to the Teamsters, his membership. Harry felt very keenly that the Bobby Kennedy cabal was just a deliberate hounding of Hoffa.

Ward: Harry was the expert on the subject of hounding.

LG: Right; he also felt strongly that Jimmy should not just be making like a lawyer. Jimmy got to the point where he thought he knew as much as the lawyers did, or more; days and weeks were spent at the Teamster headquarters with all this staff of lawyers. Then there were the various indictments, you know, against Hoffa: that Louisville case.

Ward: That was subornation of perjury, wasn't it?

LG: I'm not sure whether that was the case. But there was one case where he brought in Joe Louis, (a famous prize-fight champion) just to sit there and shake hands with Jimmy, you know, friendly. He won that case hands down! (laughter) Jimmy had this flair for things.

Whether that was the case where he was later tried on perjury, I don't recall. But the stable of stool-pigeons they used against Jimmy was unbelievable; particularly the key guy who, I guess, was primarily responsible for his conviction - guy by the name of

LG: (Edward Grady) Partin. He had a police record longer than both your arms - assault and battery, robbery, mayhem; all of which . . . .

Ward: Did they use a man like that as a witness against . . ?

LG: Yes, and all these other cases somehow got washed out. Partin was the key witness . . . .

Ward: He was worth a lot to Kennedy.

LG: Oh, god, yes. I don't know where in the hell he found these rats. Then they got Hoffa on subornation of perjury, that he tried to buy witnesses, or something like that. But that was a different scene. It didn't really overlap into Warehouse.

Ward: Well, do you want to go into that?

LG: Might as well.

Ward: All right, we're talking about the Teamsters and the ILWU.

LG: We got a lot of things done. I think it was in 1967 when we had this short strike in warehouse, partially over welfare.

One of the things we had agreed upon with the Teamsters was that we would both take a certain amount of reserves that we had in health and welfare and set up a pilot drug plan; we ought to at least try to get drugs for our members; at that time Kaiser wasn't offering them. I also had some ideas at the time that maybe we ought to merge the two health and welfare plans. I knew we'd get nothing but good results; if for no other reason than the incidence of utilization; our people used the plans much more than the Teamsters. In the case of Local 6, we were out telling the people what the plan was, constantly pounding away; "The plan is yours, use it; don't just let the money sit there."

Well, there was such a contrast between the two plans that I thought if we could merge them things would be better. But any major plans on health and welfare died off; the Teamster trustees, particularly some of those from small locals, were fearful that if a joint plan were set up their little jobs would be tossed out the window.

LG: For example, when they found out we never paid a trustee, they couldn't believe it. So, I guess the merger idea stepped on too many eggs. But the joint pilot drug plan would have been a very good thing.

Well, shortly after the agreement was concluded, the the Teamster employers went ahead and put in a drug plan for the Teamsters; we were left high and dry. It was a crucial thing because we were bound to get an awful lot of reverberations.

This came on top of a development three years earlier where somebody had made a miscalculation on how much money we needed for health and welfare to make sure that the Kaiser benefits would be covered. We ran out of dough, and I had the extremely unhappy job of going to the membership and telling them they would have to pay a dollar per visit. Let me tell you, everybody had to swallow awful hard. They took it all right.

The whole nature of a coalition of this sort is something that is hard to get across to people. Number one, there is no such thing as a substitute for competency; secondly, you have to decide in advance that you are going to do 95 percent of the work and give somebody else 100 per cent of the credit.

Ward: The first time you said that you allowed yourself one per cent!

LG: Well, okay, whatever it was. But the membership knows; these things come through like osmosis.

XX NEW MAN IN THE PICTURE

(Interview 28: 6 October, 1978)

A Very Smooth Operator

Ward: Lou, I'd like to ask you what happened along in the middle fifties when the tensions which had been bothering everybody over many years began to die down. Life became easier for the ILWU, and then new tensions arose. Could you describe them to some extent, please? For example, the advent of St. Sure into the picture?

LG: Well, the advent of St. Sure was part of a sequel to a determination made by the shipowners after the 1948 strike that the way Frank P. Foisie and Gregory Harrison were attacking the union was self-defeating.

If it doesn't work and the union fights back successfully, wins hands-down in big situations such as the 1948 west coast longshore strike and the 1949 strike in Hawaii longshore, then another development takes place inside the union, never to be underestimated. There's an enormous feeling of solidarity and strength that springs out of such a situation. It's like a group of men who have gotten used to fighting in a squared circle, all of them back to back, fighting off every enemy.

It's not a question of getting any weird ideas of invincibility, but they do develop a certain working class confidence; they are just not going to be taken on and taken over; they can handle these characters!

Well, the shipowners obviously reached that conclusion and started off with a new group which became the Pacific Maritime Association. The first to head

LG: it up was Henry Clark, an easy-going guy, an older man; whether or not he was there just temporarily, I don't know. His place was then taken by Vic Pearson. Vic Pearson was out of the shipping industry, an old sea captain. Vic Pearson was a very decent human being, easy to get along with.

Ward: I understand he got into trouble with the shipowners because he had his picture taken with some of the leaders of the ILWU.

LG: It could be; Pearson was one of those who testified as a character witness for Harry.

Ward: Yes, that sort of thing too.

LG: But on the other hand, I don't think that was fake, because there were a number of shipowners who lined up the same way. There was Hubert Brown of Pacific Far East Lines; Ken Finessey of States Line, I think. Walter Buck turned up as a character witness for Harry. I managed to talk to most of them. Even old Doc (Doctor) Leo Eloesser, (a prominent surgeon) turned up as a character witness, so I don't think that made too much difference in Vic Pearson's standing.

But Vic Pearson developed cancer and after a while he had to resign. Then his place was taken by St. Sure.

Ward: St. Sure had been advising them for some time, just as a lawyer -

LG: St. Sure might have been advising them, because he had a long background in labor relations. St. Sure for a number of years had been the head of the California Processors and Growers, an organization made up of all the canneries or cannery owners.

Ward: You had had a run-in with him years before, hadn't you, over at Santa Cruz Packing?

LG: Yes, that was back in the thirties. It was not a pleasant run-in because he was out-and-out strike-breaking. I recall one session where I said, "Well, somewhere along the line, we're going to get even, I'll tell you that." He interpreted that as a threat. It wasn't a personal threat, of course. Later on,

LG: Harry in one of his more difficult moments decided that I had threatened to kill St. Sure - no less. One of those things, but the (Santa Cruz Packing) case didn't end there.

Ward: It went to the Supreme Court, didn't it?

LG: That's right. That's why the run-in wasn't one of those quick encounters which are just as quickly forgotten. The Supreme Court ruled for the union on every single score. I recall there was a substantial group of workers who had been blacklisted, - run out and their places taken by scabs, who collected back pay; but meanwhile the job had been done. The union was wrecked at Santa Cruz Packing.

Ward: How long would the time lag be? Eight years?

LG: It was closer to five - six years.

Ward: The people had dispersed?

LG: People dispersed, took other jobs; life was fairly comfortable or a little more comfortable, they made new friends. They were not going to gamble that away, in most cases.

Ward: They take their back pay?

LG: Yes, that's all. They consider it a union victory, but it's not a true union victory because the union itself is not established full strength as it was originally.

As a matter of fact, a number of companies to this day follow this technique. J. P. Stevens (a textile manufacturer) is as good an example as any. I don't know how many times they have been cited by the (National Labor Relations) Board; how many times they have been found guilty. This goes on and on indefinitely. J. P. Stevens made the decision a long time ago that it paid them. Keep firing people, force them into unfair labor practices hearings, go out with the most blatant union-breaking program.

They have their lawyers drag it out, take as much time as possible, and then the payoff is, "Okay, so it costs us a couple of million bucks in back pay."

LG: That's chicken-feed compared to what it would cost if they had a genuine union in the place. They make those cold-blooded calculations; nothing unusual. That's what happened at Santa Cruz Packing.

St. Sure was a real charmer and a very bright guy; highly competent. I recall one day we were down at the PMA office for some meeting; it was over with and I was about to leave. I walked by the door and he happened to catch me and said, "Let's talk for a minute, Lou."

He just wanted to sit down for a personal talk; he was very blunt about the thing. He said, "I've always wondered if you still carried a grudge about the 1935 Santa Cruz Packing strike." I said, "No, not really, we finally won in the Supreme Court. I don't think that surprised you too much." He said, "Really, it didn't; but I was just hoping it was something that wouldn't affect our relationship now."

That was a charming way of going at it. I said, "You can assume that it won't and we'll take things on their merits." It wasn't a love match or anything like that, but I didn't see any purpose in hanging on to something of that sort over all those years.

An Amazing Change

LG: Plus he was a different guy. It was a rare thing for a guy in St. Sure's position to come out flatly against the right-to-work laws. Getting his support became very valuable to a lot of unions, and it was used constantly in publicity. A few other employers came along as a result. St. Sure knew what he was doing. The employers themselves literally called the whole situation on the waterfront "A new look."

Ward: Yes, I remember that.

LG: That was the title of it. That "new look" included regular meetings with the top staff of the union to discuss problems before they came to a head; even the setting up of a semi-official structure designed to head off some of the more difficult disputes before

LG: they reached the stage where there was nothing left except a confrontation. They set up what they called a "crisis committee", composed of a group of principals, namely, shipowners themselves, not vice-presidents or labor relations men; the principals themselves, including the head of PMA, I suppose St. Sure, and principals from the ILWU. In the event either party felt that some situation was getting out of hand, trouble, the crisis committee would meet.

Matson Gets The Brush-Off

LG: The fact that the "new look" had a certain genuiness to it was tested in 1949 in a funny way. Matson busted their balls trying to get the PMA to take on the union because of our refusal to handle any cargo going to Hawaii unless it was cleared by the union. We had a position that we would send certain foodstuffs and so forth; Matson's position was that we had a contract.

As to what happened at the other end, this whole business of strike-breaking down there, that was no concern of the court up here. That's when they went before Judge Harris for an injunction; I mentioned the incident where I had some conversation with Randolph Sevier, who repeated it in court.

Well, it didn't phase Harris a hair. He said, "I don't know about that conversation, but going back to the merits of the thing, why don't you gentlemen consider sitting down and talking about these things? And by the way, what's so wrong with arbitration? That's not terribly un-American."

Then he said, "What if I do issue an injunction? What good will it do really? What if the men are dispatched from the hall as they're supposed to and never get to the ship?" Which is, of course, what happened.

These were Matson's efforts, on their own; PMA was not represented at the injunctive hearings. What was being tested was whether or not the "new look" meant what it said or whether Matson's efforts to get the entire PMA lined up for a break with the ILWU would succeed. Their technique - which had also been worked

LG: out with Almon Roth and Foisie - the retributive technique, was that if there was a shut-down on one ship, they would shut the entire port down.

Everybody was watching Matson, and I will say PMA held up. As a matter of fact, they went so far that by the tail end of the Hawaii strike, PMA allowed a special provision to be written into the contract - it's still there - that in the event of a strike by any ILWU local, we did not have to load cargo which would be handled by strike-breakers or cargo that had been loaded by strike-breakers. I mention these things because with the "new look" there came -

Ward: A new man?

LG: A new man, St. Sure; and also came a situation where the employers decided they were going to get a lot further through a policy of gentle diplomacy, reasonable understanding. I wouldn't say that somebody sat down and said, "Look, these guys can be bought off."

It was not a situation like some unions people read about in the east, where somebody decides, "That guy can be reached; give him a couple of bucks." I think PMA decisions were made on a much more intellectual level, and I would credit St. Sure with that.

A man like St. Sure would say, "If we act on the up and up; when we think we're right, set our heels and don't budge, that's that; but if there's any indication that we're wrong, under no circumstances should we bull our way through or try to hammer our way to a victory regardless of the consequences. If the union raises any issue which does not affect the basic managerial rights of the employers, we are better off to agree with it than to make it another issue just to be mean and to quarrel."

It was a well designed, a well thought-out program in the belief that effective class collaboration could be achieved. And they turned out to be right. Gains were made. This wasn't a business of the kind of union you've seen develop where, in effect, the understanding is that the employers will see to it that the union stays in line and the membership pays their dues.

Ward: Like a dues check-off and all that?

LG: Yes; as a matter of fact during all that time the union never even put into effect a provision of the longshore contract which provided that any time we wanted the union shop, we could have it. The "new look" brought no big change, but bit by bit labor relations, which had been pretty acerbic over the years, took on an entirely different tone.

Ward: More relaxed?

LG: Yes; everything was on a first name basis; in the main, very friendly. To say that none of our people at the International were unhappy with this thing would be very wrong. Later on, this showed up in various ways, particularly in the mechanization program where there were some very sharp differences of opinion.

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Pensions, Dental Plan, Housing

LG: I'll give you an example of what happened when we negotiated the first pension agreement; we were determined that we were going to get a $100 a month pension; it meant shaking up the whole pension concept that 99 percent of industry was working under, this idea of full funding.

Well, these employers are all of the same family; they meet with these insurance people, they are compatriots, they belong to the same clubs, have lunch together. You'd think they would be highly influenced by something of that sort. They think that's the way the system should operate, just using that as an example.

But it didn't seem to phase them when we said, "We think we can put together a pension that will pay 100 bucks a month." "Well, they said, "we don't know whether you can or can't; all we can tell you is that the total amount of money we are prepared to put into a pension is blank." It was 15 cents an hour, the blank amount being 15 cents.

I'm sure they must have been disturbed with some of the contacts they had with the big actuarial firms, insurance people they knew. They must have gotten more

LG: than their share of ribbing along the street, because it was the general talk in the industry that the pension plan would go belly-up in no time. And it was a very odd pension plan, again, a reflection of this "new look."

Ward: Do you recall what year this was?

LG: Pearson was the head of the PMA at the time we negotiated that pension plan. I remember that.

Ward: St. Sure was already advising them?

LG: I gather so - I didn't know at --

Ward: He says in his oral history that he had been advising them for a time after the dismissal of Foisie and Harrison.

LG: That could very well be, in that transition period before he took over. I don't know whether St. Sure had any problems on the question of heading up the PMA. He was also the head of a very large employer group, the California Processors and Growers which set up a large scale organization in conjunction with Vandeleur* and others in the AFofL to make sure that they forced out all the left-wing unions, including UCAPAWA; later on the whole thing was turned over to the Teamsters union. Whether the shipowners felt this was a conflict of approach, I'm not sure. Eventually, it must have been reconciled; St. Sure became the head of both. In addition, he had a law firm.

Ward: Well, he said he virtually gave up everything. He began a general law business, but reached the point that he had no time for anything else except labor.

LG: I think that would be true.

Ward: He said his law firm became almost totally involved in labor cases.

LG: Right; he wasn't the only member of his law firm. There were others we'd bump into now and again, most of them reflecting St. Sure's general philosophy; not professional union-busters, but no patsies or pushovers. They put up a battle for their principals, but they were not conducting a crusade against the unions.

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* Ed Vandeleur, secretary, California Federation of Labor

Ward: Well, anyway, the "new look" really worked and it had its effect on the ILWU?

LG: Right. It worked; people dropped their guard. Our people found life was a lot easier than busting their backs on two-bit issues where the employer was being difficult, in effect saying, "You're not going to get a goddam thing out of me unless I'm absolutely forced to do so." So, of course, that changes the scene. That's the reason I say this designed program in no way resembled the other situations where the employers feel they can reach union officials, pass money under the table, or any crap like that.

Ward: I don't think anybody has been accused of such a thing in that ILWU-PMA relationship.

LG: I'm quite sure that is correct.

Ward: And whatever favors were done, they were open and above board, weren't they?

LG: Yes, and I don't think there were that many favors really. It wasn't that kind of a relationship; I don't think it even was much of a social relationship, except an occasional luncheon.

Ward: You don't think Harry was invited over to St. Sure's home or vice versa?

LG: If he did, it must have been a rare occasion.

Ward: You weren't invited over?

LG: No - no; which is just as well.

Ward: Well, I'm not asking you to second-guess what happened between Harry and St. Sure, except as you saw it.

LG: Obviously, the change to the so-called "new look" put labor relations on a more intelligent and constructive basis. We were able to pioneer the first dental plan, which was for children. We initiated the first one in the country; we decided that instead of trying to get dental plan coverage for everybody we would concentrate on youngsters up to 16. There was a very elaborate system of double checking on the kids, making sure they kept their appointments and reminding

LG: the mothers. Our feeling was that if you got some decent dental habits into the kids up to 16, they would keep these for the rest of their lives. This was a very novel program; I don't recall any resistance to that. Sure, they priced it out.

Later on in the sixties I happened to get the idea that there was no reason why the pension funds should just be laying around being invested in high grade securities. Later on other things happened with the pension plan, where they decided to put some of the money in common stock, but that's a story by itself. I thought there was no reason why that money shouldn't be used to build some low-cost housing.

Initially the man I tried to work with was Kenneth Saysette, the treasurer of the PMA. He was pretty much of the old school. He wasn't too hot to try it; I remember dragging him down to what was part of the old Mills Estate, down the peninsula because that land was up in the market and I thought that might be a natural for housing built through the pension fund.

I knew a little about what I was trying to do, because my brother had been a builder for years. In conversation with him, I picked up how much money was taken off the top before a house was sold. He was convinced that between the interim financing, for which they really rip you off, the advertising, speculation in terms of the amount of profit, altogether there was at least 20 per cent that went off the top, leaving aside profit to the guy who was doing the building. This was all money that could be saved.

Ward: The Mills Estate wasn't a worker's neighborhood.

LG: No. The place that appealed to me a great deal more was Tennessee Valley, right near Mill Valley, only about a ten-minute commute to San Francisco. There was some big acreage which would have lent itself very nicely to a lot of individual home building; I tried to interest Saysette in that. He dragged his feet on the thing.

Finally what did break things through was that I was approached by Justin Herman of the Redevelopment Agency. They had torn down a large part of the Western Addition

LG: (a run-down district in San Francisco) - and the land was lying there fallow for years. The more I looked into the thing, the more I was convinced that the main purpose of the Redevelopment Agency was to assist the real estate speculators, builders, and contractors.

By using the power of eminent domain, they could assemble large parcels of land for large scale development as no individual could do. When an individual goes after a project, let us say, to assemble a square block of land, the name of the game then is who's going to hold out to the end; in other words, the last guy figures he has the hammer. The outfit putting it all together has to have this piece of land.

There's a story about one of these huge office developments in New York City where they simply could never work out a deal with some little old lady who had a small house in the middle of the street. They finally worked out a deal with the city on the question of air rights and built the whole damn thing right around it. There it was - this little house.

This is the area where redevelopment could play such a highly essential purpose. What they were doing in tearing down some of those slums made some sense; but what they were not doing was replacing the slums with anything that any of the people who had lived there would have any chance under the sun of coming back to.

In one part of the Western Addition, the most attractive part, you have Cathedral Hill and all the churches; oh, you can get a blessing in every direction, I think, except I don't recall any synagogue there. Pick whatever you want, Unitarian, Baptist, the big Catholic church. No shortage of that going on.

Well, Herman came to me and said that there was a big hunk of land available. He thought it ought to be suitable for low cost housing, perhaps on a cooperative basis. He was convinced that if we put in a proposal for building St. Francis Square, which is what it was called, he was quite sure it would be acceptable.

I had two long sessions with St. Sure on that and he said, "Go ahead." The trustees were generally amenable, but a little bit skeptical. After all, it was a financial venture; was it prudent; would it pay

LG: enough returns? I thought all those bases could be covered, and eventually they were. It became a complicated thing for many reasons. For one thing, I think Saysette got to one of our trustees, because half a dozen times they practically dumped the project and I had to bail it out again.

Ward: Your trustee would?

LG: And Saysette; they decided they didn't want to go ahead with it -

Ward: In other words, he was just making trouble for the project?

LG: Yes; he had it in mind that these were going to be instant slums. Meanwhile, I had gotten the International to put up some seed money. It did not amount to a great deal, something like $2,500 or $3,000, only for the purpose of making a submission.

Marquis and Stoller were the architects and I had some advice from Jack Baskin (a builder), although later on he said he wouldn't bid on the project when he saw the drawings. We had the idea that we'd build cooperative housing to meet certain income limitations. If it was a family of three or four, there was a certain ceiling on what their income could be; if it was a larger family it would be more.

We made a presentation, and all of a sudden (Joseph L.) Eichler turns up in the picture, coddling up to me at the hearing and saying, "Why do you guys want to get into building for? You don't know anything about it. I'm an expert on this sort of thing and I already have plans for building these Eichler Towers out there, and I could expand the whole project."

Just one of these things where the guy is going to build a huge monument to himself. And I said, "No, we thought we could go ahead; we want a different kind of housing - we want middle income housing and low income housing." This was bothering him, because why have this alongside of his nice, new development? That's where Jack Shelley (who had become congressman and later mayor of San Francisco) lived for a while, remember? So, the net result was a lot of hard work. I accused Justin Herman of working with Eichler, and

LG: after getting us interested, doubling back and telling Eichler that he'd better move. "If we're turned down," I told him, "there are going to be some heads rolled down Market Street, and none will be mine." We didn't get along too well; and things got more difficult as we went along.

It did get accepted; instead of paying heavy interim financing, I persuaded the trustees to go down to the California Bank, which had been the fiduciary agent for our funds. They did the coupon clipping, banking the money, a nice profitable banking function. There was no good reason why they couldn't give us the interim financing at a reasonable rate, which they did - something like 6 percent.

How To Save A Million Dollars

LG: Then the architects came along with their plans, which did not fit the budget because the budget was built backwards. We took the number of apartments which could logically be built, leaving a large amount of open area in the interior. On that score the architects did an excellent job; the housing is all around the periphery of these squares. The center portions are like huge parks or playgrounds, and they turned out very successfully. However, other parts of their plans did not work out as well.

The idea was to first decide how much we could spend for the 300 apartments we planned to build; based on the amount that was put into the thing. Could we then meet a certain rental or payment schedule? These would be co-ops; there was to be an initial down payment of $500 or $600, and then the regular monthly payments, as you would have in any cooperative project. Well, on that score we worked backwards.

When the architects' plans came in, Jack Baskin was one of those who looked at them. Jack Baskin was a man I knew only casually in L. A. - he had broken up with his wife and decided he wanted to move north. He was very anxious to get into something.

Ward: He was an architect?

LG: He was a builder and an engineer. Very competent and knowledgeable. When the plans came in we said, "Now we have to put them out to bid." He said to go ahead, but "I'm not going to bid on them." I asked him, "Why?" and he said nobody was going to come in at our price. It could not be done inside the budget we had planned, which would allow enough money both for building and to give a fair return to the PMA on its money, which we wanted to be somewhat higher than their average rate of return. Also the bid would have to meet the standards we had in mind in terms of monthly cost.

He was right; when the bids came in, the closest one was a million dollars over what we had estimated. So, I went back to talk to Baskin again as to what the devil was wrong.

He said, "I could have told you from the very beginning; the plans are over-engineered in certain ways, absolutely unnecessary, don't make sense. It's not my job, after all, to tell you how to do these things. If you're interested in coming within the budget, I guarantee some architects I know can do it. I'll give it to you at a fixed price." (With a very low rate of return for himself - I think 4½ percent).

He was right; one of the architects, Claude Stoller, had lived in one of the Amalgamated (Clothing Workers union) housing projects in the east - he was born in one of them - and one of the things he thought would be highly effective in a co-op was a huge central heating plant like is needed in New York City; steam heat. So, he had planned a central heating plant from which you would pipe the heat to the various apartments.

Jack's position was, "You have to be out of your minds to do that here. For one thing, you don't need that much heat; secondly, people differ so much here; some people like warm apartments and some people don't like any heat at all. You install wall heaters and you build at a fraction of the cost."

A couple of minor changes, and bingo! he had a million dollars knocked off the cost. Well, we went ahead with the project and it was very successful; still is. I was over there for the fifteenth anniversary of the completion; it was finished in 1963.

Ward: It was pretty much your baby, wasn't it?

LG: Yes, I was president of that project. Bill Glazier was also a help. Everything came out to the letter; Hal Dunleavy (a housing consultant) was acting as our advisor; Jack Baskin knew FHA (Federal Housing Administration) - they had an enormous amount of confidence in him because he had been very successful as a builder around San Diego and they trusted his judgment.

So there was no great problem in getting the progress payments that were required. The pension funds got their return. A small hitch I can recall was, at the tail end we had spent more money on landscaping than we had anticipated.

They were going to put in specimen trees, initially; you can't have a kid and a fragile tree at the same time, because that kid is going to climb that tree; you put in these specimen trees and by the time a week is gone, the branches are broken. I said, "Put more money into heavier kinds of trees," which stood up extremely well.

And secondly, with all the designing, there was no sound-proofing between floors, so we put a bunch of dough into carpeting. Come the end of the project, we had a cost overrun, somewhere around $20,000.

Ward: That's the only over-run? What was the cost of the project?

LG: About $5,000,000.

Ward: And you only had an over-run of $20,000?

LG: A very small over-run. I didn't want to take it out of any of the funds which were going to the PMA and I didn't see any reason why we couldn't clean up the whole record. I remember having a very humorous lunch at Jack's with Dick Ernst, the (PMA) attorney, and Jack Baskin.

I said, "We're closing up the books now, and the quicker we get out of the thing the better." The way the co-op rules operate, as soon as you sold off 95 percent of the units, I think it was, you could turn it over to the co-op and get out of it completely. Then it would be their baby. I wanted to cut the umbilical

LG: cord as quickly as possible; I didn't want to see the union be a landlord. That could become a hopeless situation; you have a strike on and the guys would say, "Jesus Christ, we've got to pay rent to you fellas too."

So I said, "We've got this cost over-run; let's get rid of it here and now. I think part of it ought to be paid for by the contractor and part of it by the attorney." And the amount I wanted to be paid by Baskin was somewhat more, though the allowance for attorneys' fees in the whole budget was substantial. Jack Baskin stood up like a champ and said, "That's okay, I'll pay my share." Ernst swallowed a couple of times, but finally had to go along. So we wound up the project.

That didn't end things, however, because I later had to go to Washington where we changed the cooperative laws. For one thing, the way these laws read, if somebody got an increase in pay which put him in excess of the income limitations, he would be forced to move. He could sell his equity back to the co-op housing project. The equity would be only the amount of the down payment, less what was required for repair, and the new tenant would move in.

Well, if you did that you would wind up with what amounted to public housing with a down payment; plus the fact that I thought the feeling of ownership was essential to make the project work. So, Dick Adams, (an associate of Dick Ernst) and I went back to Washington and had a roundy-go-roundy with FHA.

They had become very jaundiced on cooperatives; too many of them failed, I think failed in part because they failed to tackle these problems of ownership, a feeling of pride in the project. We made two basic changes - one, if somebody's income exceeded the initial limit, the interest that they would pay would become higher than the special interest rate that prevailed on this kind of housing.

This kind of housing was semi-assistance public housing under Title 221-D3, part of the Housing Act, with money from the government at 3½ percent, which of course is an extremely good buy. Rather than be evicted, the individual would pay a rate which could go up as high as the regular FHA rate, 5½ or 5-3/4 percent. That money would go into the co-op, and it would have a few extra dollars in reserve.

LG: Secondly, we made provision that the individual could develop an equity in the housing project. There were a number of changes we made along that line, which resulted in a remarkable difference in attitude toward St. Francis Square as compared to a place like Milpitas. There, a housing project sponsored by the Auto Workers went belly-up; St. Francis Square, to the contrary, became highly successful. As a matter of fact, all of Justin Herman's brochures on the Redevelopment Agency always featured St. Francis Square for years after that; the man who practically killed it.

Ward: You had a lot of trouble with him?

LG: Oh, yes. Well, once the thing was done, it was done.

Ward: Well, then, you had the cooperation of the PMA and St. Sure was very helpful?

LG: Oh, yeah, his attitude was fine. He said, "That's what the pension money is there for."

Ward: What return did the investment pay to PMA?

LG: I think it was somewhere in the neighborhood of six percent.

Ward: For those days, that was a good return.

LG: Well, the average return for the fund in those days was somewhere between five and five and a quarter. I was determined that it would be something in excess of that, so . . . .

Ward: It gave PMA a good deal?

LG: Yes, and St. Sure's attitude in the deal reflected a very shrewd approach to labor relations. He said that the pension money wasn't there to see whether we could make a bank rich or buy a lot of stocks in big corporations; the pension fund was there to pay pensions.

Ward: So, you gave 300 families a city living at comparatively low cost?

LG: Oh, yes, the lowest cost in the city, and all in an ideal location; if you were working anywhere around the Civic Center, you could walk to work. The bus service there is excellent. The project turned out to

LG: be so successful that it became a showplace for visitors from other countries; to show that this wasn't an all-capitalist country; here was a cooperative housing project.

Going by the Square one day I heard a group talking and I couldn't make out the language exactly. It sounded Russian, so I stood behind and listened to them; somebody from the State Department was giving an explanation about St. Francis Square. It turned out to be a group of Poles.

The last group from abroad that I met there was a group of Chinese, about forty of them, who were with Luxingsha, the tourist agency. They were over here in preparation for these large-scale travel arrangements between the United States and China. They asked me to come by just to talk to them. It was just before Terry and I were taking off for China. They were all fascinated by the Square; it has become quite a show place.

The composition of the Square continues good; one-third white, one-third Asiatic and one-third black; a good mix. Something over a hundred of the cooperators have been there from the day one.

So, it was one of the best things we ever did, although there was a lot of sniping; Howard Bodine spread rumors around that my brother had made a piece of money off the project. I finally nailed my brother down and said, "Did you ever have anything to do with the thing?" "Yeah, Jack Baskin was trying to buy a whole bunch of doors and couldn't make contact and I knew some guys in L. A. who wanted the work and could make them up in a hurry for him. So, I put them in touch with him; big deal." (laughter) That sort of crap.

This sniping went on; the only way I can figure it out is that even within PMA there were people who were not accepting this new look the same way. Guys like Ken Saysette. Anyway, the project went through. Saysette was very anxious that we move into common stock, something that I opposed bitterly and not completely successfully, but at least avoiding those insane portfolios whereby 50 per cent of the money was put into common stock. Our portfolio never did go over ten or eleven percent, primarily on account of my hell-raising.

LG: I mention St. Francis Square because it was an indication of what St. Sure felt about these things. I think he had a more positive vision of the project than Harry himself. Harry, for some reason or other, got very jaundiced on the whole thing, even though a number of warehousemen lived there.

It's true that not all the longshoremen were eligible because their income was too high, but the "B" men were; a number of them moved in. Leroy King,*who lives out there still was an original cooperator, and was chairman of the board of directors.

Ward: Doesn't he make too much money for that?

LG: Leroy? No. He then paid the higher interest rate. I remember him bringing a new manager by and introducing him to Harry. Of course, this man was very impressed. Harry's immediate reaction was "Well, that's the last goddam one like that we'll ever build." He got bugs on these things, some of which I gave up trying to understand.

When they tried to impose the regular tax rate on St. Francis Square, I appeared on the co-op's behalf before the Board of Supervisors on the tax appraisal. I said, "You can't use the same measure on a co-op housing project that you can, let us say, on a condominium."

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LG: And the reason for that was very simple - it was not like a condominium. You couldn't go out and sell it in the open market. If you wanted to sell your apartment you had to sell for whatever you had in it; you couldn't make a nickel profit.

How in the devil can you put a co-op owner in the same class as someone who bought a condominium for say, $30,000, and now you appraise it at $60,000, a so-called "fair market value." There is no such thing as a fair market value on this. It has nothing to do with the market; it has to do with the rules of the co-op.

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*Leroy King, secretary-treasurer of ILWU Local 6.

Ward: So how much of a cut did you get on the Square's tax rate?

LG: It was quite substantial. I recall Harry getting terribly indignant because he had to pay his taxes on fair market value and here were these guys getting a free ride on the union! Of all the petty things! Completely ignoring the question of what you do about the tremendous need for low-cost housing.

Ward: I wonder if that accounts for one of the differentiations St. Sure made between you and Harry, that apparently Harry's vision was strictly trade union, whereas yours went beyond trade union into housing, health, dental care . . .

LG: Yes, I got mixed up in all these things -

Ward: Old age; he felt that these things were not strictly trade union affairs?

LG: St. Sure realized that I thought union resources, union strength and union funds, including joint funds, should often be put to work in ways that were different from standard "business unionism." There was no reason why, if we had a pension fund, we must turn it over to an insurance company to have fun with; no reason why we couldn't handle things ourselves.

Ward: But obviously this honeymoon with St. Sure, at least as far as you were concerned, didn't last forever?

LG: It didn't break off, either. Oh, it got tough at certain stages with the mechanization agreement; that comes in '61 and in '66 and '71; those were different scenes. But at the period I'm talking about, these were not conflict points.

St. Sure knew perfectly well how I felt about these things, like the pilot dental plan for kids. I thought it was very good. Harry helped carry the ball on that; Goldie Krantz (director of the ILWU-PMA welfare fund) of course was very helpful, and the trustees were sort of going along, although I got a feeling that they didn't hear any marching music with it; the same thing was true of housing.

Later on I helped set up this Council for Health Plan Alternatives, a broad scale organization. We had just about all the key unions in the state engaged in

LG: an attempt to see what we could do about the scandalous increase in health costs; we sought the promotion of more (Health Maintenance Organizations) HMO's or things similar to Kaiser. Einar Mohn was the chairman; I was secretary.

It also had another interesting aspect; here was the ILWU, considered to be a left-wing, maverick union, almost a pariah, and yet suddenly we became part of a very broad coalition. Well, I think that's part of the job of the leftwing, not to throw away your principles, not trying to be a good guy by showing you're just as much of a bum as the next guy.

Hang on to your principles and at the same time try to find focal points where you can develop united activity that would do everybody a lot of good. I still consider that to be the secret of successful leftwing trade unionism. The Teamsters always knew that; it was not uncommon for us to get into lengthy discussions on everything, foreign affairs and what have you.

"Conformance and Performance"

Ward: Well, you said yourself that St. Sure came to exert a very powerful and very unfortunate influence over Harry Bridges. How did that begin to manifest itself?

LG: Well, it manifested itself in a number of ways. First, there was the program launched by the employers - I'm sure directed primarily by St. Sure - that they called "conformance and performance". It was a very clever program for which you couldn't fault them, as employers. They said, "Look, we're not arguing about the agreement; you think there ought to be more money there, we'll take this up when the demands are open. If you think there ought to be other things in the agreement, we'll take those up."

Bear in mind, we were making good progress in all these agreements, picking up wage scales, good pensions; had done extremely well in health and welfare; had proliferated in the whole field of vacations, eventually even getting some holidays with pay.

LG: St. Sure said, "We made a deal and we'll pay. The least we're entitled to is that there be conformance with the agreement and performance with the agreement."

For example, one of the issues which became a subject of continuous discussion at caucus after caucus was the system that had developed during World War II, I think, which was called "four on, four off"; that was a system whereby if you took a gang of say, eight men in the hold of a ship, four guys would work the first four hours, the other guys taking it easy and then the other way around.

Then, many of the locals began to perfect this in their own way. They had an understanding among themselves; okay, you guys get the first four hours - these guys would come down and work four hours, then knock off. They didn't even stick around the job after four hours. This was particularly true of night gangs, because there is less supervision; it's one of the reasons that some guys like to work nights. By one o'clock the guys were making the last drinks at the bar, and they're supposed to be at work and they are being paid the full eight hours!

Ward: At overtime, too!

LG: At overtime; so "four on and four off" became a big issue. In some places it never was a sticky thing; in Portland there was a different attitude; the idea of the guy walking off the job at the end of four hours was not accepted. On the other hand, in places like San Francisco this became just a standard method of work. In Los Angeles, they were the ones who began to perfect the business where at the end of four hours you were finished for the day.

Those, obviously, were legitimate beefs by the employers. St. Sure was smart - he knew they were not issues where the union could tell him, "Go to hell; if you're screwed, you're screwed."

Instead you had the countervailing situation with the union picking up gains, the relationship improving with the employers, the fact that we were making a number of changes - you would feel a certain obligation to get these things straightened out. In other words, not to give the employer a great big break, but at least give him what he paid for. So "conformance and performance" became an issue all by itself.

LG: When it came to the question of performance, in many cases our guys developed rules that took no end of imagination and invention. For example, in Los Angeles, the gangs that worked around the docks - a truck would come in and unload a lot of cargo on the floor of the dock. They'd have to make up the thing on pallet boards, so they would have dock gangs for that purpose; but then in other cases the pallets had to be discharged and put into loads or high-piled for storage on the docks.

The guys invented rules to divide the work. If a guy was in a palletizing gang, he would not do depalletizing. (laughter) Now, all these things were pure inventions. What they amounted to, really, were devices for featherbedding; taking it easy and making the job as comfortable as possible.

Bear in mind, they were also doing a lot of hard work, because most of the work was still being hand-handled, that's all; and handling longshore cargo, no matter how you cut it, is still rough work. It could well be that four hours of that work at a steady pace is plenty. Frankly, my own feeling about the "four on - four off" set-up was actually in some respects a setback for the men. Eight men working together at a half-way decent speed is really much easier on them than four men working at one time and trying to meet the hook, working at high speed.

Ward: Well, the way I've seen it in the hold of a ship, the guys in the gang have 30 minutes on and 30 minutes off. The guys who were off would just lie around and get out of the way. In that way, the guys who were working really put out.

LG: Well, that was just another variation of four-on and four-off. Half on and half off, that had all kinds of names. But I'm not actually sure the guys were doing themselves a favor. On some jobs, where a good deal of machinery was being used, like fork lifts in the hold, maybe I could see where that could work out very comfortably and make the job very easy.

Meeting the hook was still what the employers would be watching, namely, the hook cycle to determine how much cargo was going in or out. Where you have to be humping cargo all the time, four men trying to meet the hook where eight men could do it much more easily and at a better pace would have made more sense, I think; but habits and practices of work develop, and nothing much you can do about it.

Ward: Well, did this campaign of St. Sure's, starting out with what you call the legitimate complaints of the employers, did it get into complaints that were not so legitimate?

LG: Every once in a while, but there you never got a feeling that St. Sure was pushing too hard. Individual employers might try that, yes, but you never got a feeling that St. Sure was breaking his neck on it. He was very shrewd, he knew what the limitations were and he knew when he was on firm ground; he knew that on the question of conformance and performance, he definitely was on very strong ground.

All I'm trying to put together here is a framework to show how the thing developed . . . .

Ward: Very gradually, very . . . .

LG: Right, and very cleverly. I'd say that St. Sure as a person would not feel that he was doing anything wrong. Here was this man, J. Paul St. Sure, son of a Federal judge, eminent attorney in his own right, a very bright negotiator, an effective administrator. I don't think he ever sat down and said to himself, "Now I can take over that union through a series of devices and techniques for corruption and undermining, wooing them and then screwing them."

I don't think any characterization of St. Sure like that would be correct. I think it would be more accurate to figure that St. Sure felt that this was actually a more intelligent way of conducting labor relations. He knew that the ILWU was a very tough union and that even with all the camaraderie which was developing in the new relationship, still by and large there was a very tough core in this union that couldn't be pushed around.

Ward: In other words, then, you seem to be saying that St. Sure was being honest with himself; when asked if it was true that he had corrupted Harry Bridges, St. Sure replied, "No, I don't think so."

LG: I think that was a perfectly honest answer.

Ward: But still you think he had a bad influence on Bridges?

LG: I don't think he corrupted Bridges; I think that there was a stage when Bridges went along with his program. In other words, it sort of was bound to mature that way. That's harder to put your finger on.

Ward: Who was it said that the road to heaven is downhill?

LG: Or hell is paved with good intentions. But more and more, there came a feeling on the part of the men that - not that the union had sold out, that wasn't it - the union was getting different, that it was becoming more and more of an administrative body, an elaborate contract body.

Here you had a contract covering about 15,000-16,000 men up and down the Coast, two full-time Coast Committeemen; in addition, Harry was a Coast Committeeman when he sat in on it, also other officers would participate, as assistants; an elaborate piece of machinery for a single agreement.

The agreement became more and more complicated - I met a chap in L.A. from Local 13 when I went down there awhile ago, and I asked him how things were working out. He said, "There's nothing wrong with the agreement as such - the money is good, the money is good - but Jesus Christ! this agreement is getting so complicated to administer. I don't think we can afford to go with this two on, two off anymore."

What he meant by that is that they have a rule in Local 13, the same as Local 10 and most other Pacific Coast longshore locals, that when you are elected to office, you can serve only two years and then you have to go back on the job. And his point was very simple. He said, "Christ, it takes about a year to learn the agreement, with all its ins and outs for administrative purposes - not just the ordinary way of learning it on the job - and by that time, if you run for reelection and get reelected, you figure, why bust my ass?" He's getting to the end of his term anyway.

Something has to change, because more and more the union has become an administrative body. On the other hand, if you look at the thing historically, maybe you also have to accept the fact that this was inevitable. In other words, that dynamism, the concerted and almost daily militancy that was the name of the game and was

LG: characteristic of the industry between 1934 and '48, could not go on forever. Bear in mind, Foisie and Harrison gave it their best shot in 1948 and couldn't win it. The other employers were a lot more intelligent about the thing and were getting a much better job done, particularly when it came to making a major transition to containerization.

Ward: Well, now we ride on the lip of that one - shall we leave it for now?

LG: Might as well leave it at that point.

XXI THE MECHANIZATION PROGRAM

(Interview 29: October 10, 1978)

Velvet Glove On Steel Hand

Ward: We were talking about St. Sure and his relationship with the ILWU; the fact that he had been very cooperative in the beginning years of that relationship.

LG: Yes; as a matter of fact, he sort of continued in that role during the time he was the head of the PMA. I forget exactly what year he died, some time I think in the late 1960s.

Ward: I think so; '69, I believe.

LG: As I recall, something happened in the sixties which I guess was a pretty bad blow to him. He had been the head of the California Processors and Growers for years. It was a multi-employer group of canneries that had worked out the arrangements with Ed Vandeleur (former head of the California State Federation of Labor, AFofL) at the time of the UCAPAWA and the transition they made into the Teamsters. Well, all of a sudden, the cannery people dropped him.

What the internal politics were I'm not sure; whether this was a palace revolution or that the line he was taking with the ILWU was so different from the one they would consider to be correct for the California Processors and Growers.

I do know that he took this development very personally. He had spent so many years putting the thing together and holding it up. The implications were that

LG: toward those later years his primary concern was with the ILWU, rather than with any other groups, although his law firm handled any number of employer accounts; their primary interest was in labor relations.

It was during St. Sure's period that a number of changes began to take place in the ILWU contract; became a bit of a handle for the employers. I mean it's not that I think that all employers are alike; that when they come home at night, the first thing they do is kick the dog, whack the kids and then beat up the wife. Some of them can be quite pleasant and amenable.

Then there's some degree of difference between the people who represent employers and the employers themselves. The employers keep their nose on that dotted line all the time, watching the financial operations from day to day. The more competent labor relations people for the employers have a somewhat broader vision.

There's no doubt in my mind that St. Sure's appraisal as to what ought to be done in the case of the ILWU had a good deal more breadth than that of the other employers. He was dealing with a complicated industry, much more complicated than appears on the surface.

The shipowners are really the principals. They are the ones who invest the big money in the ships and the long term leases on piers and terminals. You've always had the stevedoring contractor; all he does, basically, is to sell a longshoreman's work. This was particularly true during the earlier days of stevedoring operations before the advent of new machinery, the forklift, various types of machines such as the one called the robot.

All a stevedoring company needed to go into business was a couple of save-alls, some rope slings, maybe a couple of pallet boards, perhaps one forklift or a jitney and they're in business. The stevedoring companies were always shrewd enough to stay fairly close to most of the unions.

It was not uncommon to get rumbles back from the waterfront that yes, the shipowners were opposed to this, that and the other thing, but not the stevedoring

LG: companies; they were prepared to go along. In some cases, I think they were entirely happy to go along because when they are selling somebody else's labor; the more of it you have to sell - and you figure a certain amount of override - the more you get.

It's one of the reasons I'm convinced that during World War II, certain changes in working conditions developed on the waterfront which became well nigh irreversible because the army and navy, and various branches of the maritime commission that were handling shipping for the War Shipping Administration practically didn't give a damn how much of a cost the stevedoring company ran up; it made no difference to them.

As far as the stevedoring company was concerned, it it wasn't a damn bit interested in how fast the job got done, either. If the company had a job that ordinarily would be done in four days and the company stretches it out to five or even six days, that's just a little more money to him. So why bust his neck on these things?

Well, it isn't too long before any longshoremen who know their business - and they know it inside out - get a grasp of what's going on and they figure fine, if this is a merry-go-round, we'll take a ride too.

I think a lot of things such as the four-on, four-off and other work practices developed during that time, some of which they were able to recoup and some which they never could. But four-on, four-off became an invidious practice; just pure invention.

They were able to get by because, as far as the stevedoring contractor was concerned, that didn't bother him a great deal. Sure the stevedoring contractor had to deal with the shipowner; that was the man from whom he had received his contract.

On the other hand, the stevedoring company could sort of play it both ways. On the one hand, be friends with the union and say, "Look, we can get along, fellows," and at the same time tell the shipping company, "Goddam it, there's only so much I can get done with these guys; they won't work any faster and we can't do any better than that. We'll just have to live with it."

LG: So, you had these contradictions. I think that with the setting up of the Pacific Maritime Association, they even began to change the voting rights in many ways, so that these stevedoring companies did not have that much of a voice on the whole question of policy, contracts, and so forth. Anyway, these were complications that St. Sure had to find his way through.

Ward: In his oral history he complained about several thousand alleged violations of the contract on the part of the ILWU. I suppose that is what you're discussing.

LG: Yes, he figured that each one of these things was a violation; four-on, four-off by a gang is a violation. That's one violation and the next gang is doing the same thing, so that's two violations. If you start counting that way you count up pretty fast.

Ward: Then there were other things too.

LG: Right; for example, there was the question of unnecessary men. These are some of the things that later on led to the mechanization agreement. We began to develop in effect what amounted to "observers" on the job. Let me give you an example: at one time, scrap iron used to be handled in the hold of the ship where they have huge clam shells that would take the scrap iron, dump it in the square of the hatch; then the men would have to haul it back to the different sides of the hatch to try to get a level load.

Later on, they developed a scheme whereby instead of using a clam shell, they used a huge magnet which dropped a tremendous amount of scrap iron at one time.

They began to use huge bulldozers to push the stuff around and level it off, but that did not change the minds of our guys; they still required the regulation gang, eight men in the hold. The other men just stood around. There were actually some humorous examples; I recall one instance - I'm not sure that anyone did this seriously - where the employers maintained that the union men demanded a television set on the job because when the men had to sit around, they wanted something to do.

Yarns Of The Docks

Ward: That sounds like the story of the longshoreman and the nine pairs of women's panties.

LG: Yes, you always have a certain amount of that. Of course, when you get into stories of pilfering on the waterfront, they go on and on -

Ward: And the grand piano and all that . . . .

LG: That's right; grand pianos and Sullivan with the Japanese silk, which I think is still the classic story. Banana Nose Sullivan was working in a gang discharging bolts of Japanese silk. It was getting towards holiday time and he said, "This is exactly what my wife would like - she could make herself some beautiful dresses and some for the kids."

The question was, how do you get the damn thing off the ship - you can't just throw it over your shoulder and walk off; guards around all the time. He finally figured that just before the shift was ready to break, he took off his clothes and had the guys wrap him up in part of a bolt of silk; maybe not the whole bolt; that would have been too big since there was an awful lot of it.

Then he got his clothes back on and with the help of the guys got up the ladder all right. He starts walking down the dock and the guys notice he's turning a very deep purple. Apparently, what happens is that once you wrap something in silk, the silk begins to bind, getting tighter and tighter. And somebody suddenly realized either they unwrap Banana Nose Sullivan in a hurry or he is finished!

So, you had the sight of these guys stripping off his clothes and unwrapping him right in the middle of the dock, before he left this world entirely! (laughter) There are all kinds of yarns like that and a lot of them are very colorful, but we can't just go back into all these things.

Anyway, it was a different atmosphere. When it came to a lot of the issues I guess the employers must have taken a certain amount of heat. I'm sure when they

LG: went to their own private clubs they belonged to, they must have gotten plenty of flack from the people in the trade.

When it came to the business of launching a pilot dental plan for kids, their attitude was good. St. Sure, by and large, was the one who stood up best on the thing. I don't think he had that kind of support among some of his staff people, who preferred to do just the ordinary day-to-day pencil pushing, and the less work the better. St. Sure's attitude on these things was good; at the same time, I'm sure he felt that along the line these things would all pay off.

He was one of the few people who came out against the right-to-work law, a referendum he spoke out against. I think he had a feeling that it was the right thing to do, partially, I'm sure, because he knew this would bring back day-to-day guerilla warfare, which would be the way any self-respecting union could survive.

He was far more of a complicated character than would appear on the surface, yet to put him in the classification of a missionary who decided that his objective in life was to see what he could do for the downtrodden would be a serious error -

Ward: You seem to be saying that he knew what he was doing, and the time was coming when he wanted some favors in return.

LG: I think he felt that sooner or later that would come along. To pinpoint any particular development in the relations between Bridges and the Coast Committee and St. Sure, and to say "there was the turning point," would be a mistake. There was a transitional period, there was a good deal more confidence in each other. They didn't have their fists up all the time.

Ward: Were you a member of that Committee?

LG: No, but I generally took part in negotiations. I was a member of the negotiating committee -

Ward: I see, but not the Coast Committee.

LG: Not the Coast Committee. No, the Coast Committee was elected separately; during that time Howard Bodine was a member a good deal of the time; Thomas was later on.

Ward: Those two men had the reputation of being on the conservative side in the ILWU, didn't they?

LG: Not particularly. L. B. Thomas was more of a maverick and an individualist, I'd say. Howard saw nothing wrong with simple straight unionism. Why not do this or that if you get something out of it?

Ward: Well, that was going on then in this transitional period, just naturally?

LG: Right; it was falling in place. I remember some pretty violent arguments we got into around the mechanization program; while the philosophy was pretty well identical at the start, it began to diverge on the question of what sort of rights are retained for the workers, what sort belong to the employer.

In other words, some felt whatever conditions had been built up over the years were all for sale at the right price. Well, the mechanization program arose primarily because of the advent of the container. The container was coming in.

Ward: As early as '59, that was obvious, wasn't it?

LG: As early as 1959 but actually, I think, a little earlier. In 1957, the longshore caucus in Portland, was where it was first discussed. In 1959 the union and the PMA negotiated an agreement that contained the first down payment, so-called, on the mechanization program. That was a down payment of a million and a half dollars.

The first full-blown mechanization agreement was negotiated in 1961, a five year agreement, renewed in 1966 for another five years. That's the one that ran out in 1971, at which point there was a strike that broke out all up and down the coast, when St. Sure was no longer around. Whether that would have made any difference, I have serious doubts. By that time a number of things had happened within the longshore ranks; the mechanization agreement broke down on some very fundamental issues.

Ward: Well, in '61 and '62 there were groans and moans from all over on the west coast about the mechanization agreement, weren't there?

LG: Not particularly; but there were a few things where there were moans and groans, yes. One of the things that happened in the '61 agreement was agreement abolishing unnecessary men; so you were bound to get moans and groans where the men are accustomed to working with certain gangs, a certain group of men, and suddenly they find this cut down.

There were moans and groans because there was language in the contract to the effect that any new or changed operation would mean that the old 2100 pound sling load was no longer applicable. If a factory load came down, let us say, instead of having 2100 pounds, it had 3,000 pounds, then all of a sudden the men were seeing a 3,000-pound load -

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Moans And Groans

LG: Well, the moans and groans you heard in '61 had to do with the fact that there were many changes. In other words, the men were used to working a certain way and of course making changes is always a difficult thing.

Ward: And the sling loads and things like that.

LG: Now, I might be getting into an area here - sometimes it looks like hair-splitting, but it's not; there are much more important considerations.

Fundamentally, I think that the idea of the mechanization contract was sound. We were not going to be able to keep witnesses on the job any more successfully than the railroad firemen were able to keep their witnesses on the job; no longer required because of the diesel. Legislation finally cut through that whole thing on behalf of the railroads and to all intents and purposes legislated these guys out of a job.

With containers coming along, what do you do, break down a container after it hits the dock and fill it up again? A container is putting somewhere around twenty to forty tons of cargo into the hold in one crack; when

LG: your crane is operating efficiently it does so within a four and one-half minute cycle. When they are contained in cells, there would be sort of slides called runners on which the containers are dropped into the hold. Once the cycle is begun, let's say a container ship comes in from another country, they empty out one cell. Then they start a process where one comes in and one comes out, so that the cycle is four and one-half minutes . . .

Ward: Taking one in and one out?

LG: Usually empty out; a full one in. Well, the turnaround on vessels like that changed the whole industry .

Ward: From ten days to a day or two, huh?

LG: Many a ship could be turned around in 18 hours, like the Matson ships. The total number of man-hours on a regular ship might be 10,000; on a container ship, several hundred, by the time you got through. Highly revolutionary changes, bound to disturb the men. A job to which they would be accustomed for many, many years.

Let us say, oh, a ship from Hawaii comes in with a load and taking a load of general cargo going back; you pretty well figure that there would be three or four days of discharging and another four days of loading. So, you had a job of about eight days on the ship, and the practice was that the gang which started the job finished the job.

Well, these changes, while they might appear subtle at first, were deep-going; even more deep-going was a feeling on the part of the guys that the conditions that were built up over the years, such as the 2100-pound sling load, were going down the drain.

I recall, for example, Bjorne Halling storming up to the office; he was just fit to be tied. Bjorne was a very good longshoreman; the guys always called him a working fool. He believed when you worked, you worked; none of this four-on, four-off; he generally worked in the hold.

And there was fire shooting out of his eyes, screaming at Harry, "Three thousand - no, 30 sacks - on a goddam sling load; a 3,000 pound load, and then they

LG: were belly-packing them on top of that." Harry said something would have to be done about that. Something was finally done; they had to put them on rollers, or what have you.

This was a breakdown on conditions, as the men saw it. These unnecessary men might be unnecessary on one job, had an easy job for one day, but the next day they might be on some other cargo where they were humping all the time; they were digging constantly because it was much tougher work. They might be shoveling copra or handling hides or cement, so they didn't see the thing the same way. In other words, I think too much of it on our part was a quick approach and missing the mark.

The basic idea of the mechanization program would have been all right limited to that idea and not extended into other peripheral areas which finally resulted in much more fundamental changes, some that have gone very deep. The basic idea saw the folly of resisting a machine blindly and in effect conducting a Luddite program of seeing that the machine does not go into effect.

The Japanese longshoremen were doing just that; when they were building grain elevators there - a much more efficient and intelligent way of handling grain, by the way, instead of by hand, sack by sack - these Japanese longshoremen tore them down whenever they could.

Well, those things, we knew, had a limit, so the basic idea was of accommodating to change, but making the employer pay for it; of getting a good, substantial hunk of the machine. That, in my opinion, is a perfectly sound thing.

(Editor's note: The following vignette is an afterthought of the narrator's, inserted here as a colorful sidelight on the problem of mechanization. It is not voiced on tape.)

An Evening With Chaplin

LG: Speaking of the Luddite philosophy reminds me of a time, after Charlie Chaplin came out with his movie, Modern Times, when I had dinner with him. I had a friend from college days, Dan James, whom I used to visit at his home at Carmel. Well, he was working for Chaplin on The Great Dictator, and one day Dan called me and said Chaplin would like to talk to Harry and me. So we fixed up a date and Harry and I went down to Los Angeles and had dinner with him. His wife at that time was Paulette Goddard. She was at the dinner table with us, but disappeared right after.

While talking about The Great Dictator, Chaplin would jump up every now and then and act out a point he was making -- very comical. After listening and watching for a while, I said, "I get the feeling -- it makes me wonder if there might be some kind of Luddite thinking behind "Modern Times."

Chaplin replied, very proudly: "I am a Luddite."

I shut up, but sometime later in the conversation I just had to make another remark: "But don't you realize that if Luddite thinking had prevailed in the world, there'd be no such thing today as motion pictures?"

The comedian's instant retort was: "That would be just as well!" Never blinked an eye. (End of Insert)

As a matter of fact, I put together a book on Men And Machines - a photo story, done primarily by (Photographer) Otto Hagel; I worked on the text and the editing, making the point that there were certain fundamental things we got out of the mechanization agreement.

One was the concept of shrinking the work force from the top; that as mechanization came along you can't apply seniority in the usual way. On most jobs if a machine comes along where out of a half dozen workers you displace two people, then the two guys on the job most recently are the ones who go. Seniority

LG: is terribly important, because you have to safeguard the older guy; otherwise he would be out on his ass first. Seniority has been one of the fundamental things that workers fight for from day one.

In the case of mechanization, our idea was that the way the worker shares in the saving of the machine is to shrink the work force from the top; let them retire with a substantially higher pension, as well as a cash-out.

A man could take an earlier retirement at age 63; he'd have a bit of bridge that would carry him over from 63 to 65, the bridge being the amount of money that he would be short of Social Security; then pick up the Social Security at age 65. This was the program of shrinking the work force from the top; I think the program was eminently sound. It gave the older men a chance to retire; it gave the younger guy a chance to move up into some of the more skilled positions.

A guy might have been working in the hold of the ship for years waiting for a crack at a job such as a winch-driver or a fork lift driver. That wouldn't come to him until one of the older guys retired, because the general principle on the waterfront is that the older men are the ones who get the jobs which are a little easier.

It was a well-kept tradition, and enforced. The idea of some young guy coming down to the waterfront and spending a half a year on the heavy work and then getting a softer job; no way - he couldn't get by with that. There was a kind of self-discipline among these men.

Even the grievance machinery, under the contract, is administered by the union. If the employer is unhappy with the result of the union grievance machinery, he then can make an appeal; otherwise it just sits; the union makes the determination. The fundamentals of the mechanization program, if confined to this, was 100 percent sound; plus the fact, as to whether you got enough or didn't get enough, as long as you have a union around that's tough, that's something you bargain out later.

LG: Okay, so you got 29 million dollars out of the first mechanization agreement - or whatever it amounted to - and you found out later that it wasn't a good bargain, the next time around you come in and ask for more; that's how simple it was. As a matter of fact, we did ask for more, but it took different forms. I recall the '61 negotiations which ended up as fishbowl negotiations, where the entire committee was in the Santa Maria room. You remember that room at 150 Golden Gate?

Ward: Seated about 200.

LG: Yes. Well, the committees sat across the table from each other; then all the delegates sat in; a very healthy thing because we were discussing something very new and different, and the mechanization agreement, when discussed in those terms, was very sound.

But to give you what might appear to be a very miniscule thing, there was a provision in the agreement, that in the event the employers happened to load outsize loads, something over 2100 pounds, the slingload limit was kept in the contract.

In other words, if something were done in the traditional way, cargo comes in and is put on the skin of the dock, then along comes a longshore gang and has to make up a sling load that goes in the hold of the ship; that would be a regular slingload and the limit was supposed to apply.

But there was a provision that if there were any new or changed operations, such as a pre-fabricated load or a pre-palletized load, it could go into the hold as is, with an additional bit of language designed for our protection which read that if the men were forced to work under onerous conditions they could stop work until the arbitrator made a ruling. This provision was almost never exercised.

One of the things I do know is that the average longshoreman has a tendency to meet the hook. If the sling load comes down at a certain speed, he's going to meet that. So, a 3,000 pound load is coming down - thirty 100-pound sacks, instead of 21 100-pound sacks; he's going to try to meet that load; the necessity to maintain that cycle is built into the nature of his work; to meet the hook. He's going to try to meet the hook regardless.

LG: Howard Bodine's attitude was absolutely contemptuous. He said, "You don't know anything you're talking about; you haven't the slightest goddam idea. What you don't realize, Lou, is that these employers add men and machines in their own interest, they do it in their own interest to get that ship out faster." I said, "That doesn't apply if the men are going to meet the hook anyway. They are going to work harder, that's all."

That gets back to Bjorne Halling. Mechanization has broken down all the conditions the guys had known for years. They don't care whether this goddam load has been made up at Pillsbury Flour Mill, or the dock. All they know is that the load had 30 sacks on it instead of 21 sacks; weighed that much more; plus they had the job of belly-packing. Some were even screaming that some of the loads were so goddam high they could hardly reach up to get the top cases.

These things all make a difference in terms of the day-to-day conditions of the men. That's where you heard this rumble about what had happened on the waterfront. Not on the mechanization agreement per se; on the idea of early retirement; increased pensions; the guys by and large were happy with that.

Ward: This difference of opinion between you and Bodine, how did that affect Harry?

LG: Harry just sat through the discussion; nothing changed.

Ward: He didn't take sides?

LG: No, but the language was left as is, including the reference to "new and changed operations."

Ward: St. Sure approved of the change, of course.

LG: Of course. St. Sure knew perfectly well what he was doing. He accomplished two things: one, getting rid of unnecessary men; two, loads must be accepted as they come in.

Ward: Big things!

LG: Those two things in themselves would be a radical change, because all other things trail along behind them; even before the steady-man beef came along;

LG: an issue that developed later on and became a big thing. Steady men wasn't so much of an issue in 1961 as it was in 1966, because by then containerization had come along quite a ways. There is no question about it but that a container crane is a big investment . . .

Ward: You can't handle those weights with the ship's winches?

LG: No - no. Usually, ship's gear has a jumbo boom that will take some heavy loads when properly rigged.

Ward: Couple or three tons, maybe?

LG: No, it can handle 20 or more, but it works much more slowly and doesn't work the whole ship. On a container, you work the whole ship. Ship's gear is not going to have anything like the container cycle.

Taking a good sized container ship, two container cranes can handle that ship moving back and forth from hatch to hatch. There's no question that the investment in a container crane, even in those days, would be at least a million dollars . . .

Ward: Then the ship had to be either rebuilt, or . . .

LG: Cranes were built to suit the ship. You had one type of container crane built for the Matson ships for use in Hawaii and on the mainland; fundamentally, the same crane, handling a 24 foot box. Later on the standard container became 40 feet.

As a matter of fact, there was all kinds of hassling and haggling going on in Washington, D. C. in an attempt to get a uniform size container box all over the world; the one that has finally been pretty well established is the 40-foot container. That's the one you see on the highways; they carry a lot of tonnage, and then the cellular structure within the ship is built accordingly.

You have a ship built to take 24 foot containers, and that's a different story from 40 foot containers; they don't adapt themselves that easily. They tried to get some that were adaptable, but Matson, in their case it didn't make too much never-mind; they had control of both ends of the line, anyway. It wasn't

LG: as though they were running into docks or ports somewhere else where there was a whole variety of container ships requiring different kinds of gear, different kinds of cells, and so forth.

Matson had a tight-knit operation and was doing beautifully on the container ships. They made tremendous inroads into the longshore work force, here, and even bigger ones in Hawaii; there, for all intents and purposes all shipping was Matson. You had the changeover from sack sugar to bulk, all ships being loaded by bulk; also the changeover from piece-by-piece cargo handling to containers. Before long you saw a work force in Hawaii that had been over 2,000 men shrink to less than a thousand.

Ward: Was that about the same percentage of loss as on the west coast?

LG: I'd say it was higher . . . .

Ward: In Hawaii? Well, for instance, Local 10 in San Francisco had about 8,000 members - how many has it now?

LG: When you're using the figure of 8,000 members you're talking about an unusual period - you're talking about the period during the war. That was a completely artifically inflated thing. I'd say before World War II it would be 4,000. Now, I'd say they have about 2600 jobs.

In Hawaii, a port like Hilo, which had a certain amount of general cargo because it serviced all the Big Island, its only export was sugar, dropped from 600 men to something less than 80; places like Kahalui went down to a handful. So, those are drastic changes that went on.

Ward: Were there any other problems that affected relationships with St. Sure?

LG: Not particularly; fundamentally our attention was directed towards the mechanization concept <u>per se</u> which I thought was good. I thought we ought to concern ourselves to make sure that we had all the necessary men and secondly, when it came to the business of accepting loads in whatever form, I thought the question of conditions to be fundamental.

LG: Those are the areas where we got the first kickbacks on the agreement. Of course, Gleason's crack was partly wisecracking, a technique of sniping at the ILWU to make the ILA look a bit better. He said, "Aah, you don't have a mechanization agreement, you just sold the Rule Book."

Ward: Who said this?

LG: Gleason, Teddy Gleason from the ILA; just being snide, but his crack about the Rule Book to some extent was correct. When it came to the question of putting the emphasis where it belonged, you allow for certain changes, but you don't allow for basic changes that affect the work patterns of men, the workload of the individual man.

Now, the contract reads that the men had the right to stop work if they consider the workload to be "onerous"; in other words, if they're putting in extra heavy loads and the employers don't add men, so that it's an onerous work situation, the men can stop work; in this case an arbitrator is called down - the men don't leave the job - and takes a look.

If he considers the work onerous, he directs a change and the men are paid for time lost. If he doesn't consider it onerous, he can direct the men to go back to work and they don't get paid for time lost. But at least there was some attempt at fighting back on the question of the onerous work.

Now, you can say that these things become theoretical; they do, in the sense that as the containerization spreads, the old work form disappears completely; it isn't as though they have a load that is made up in a different way; it's in a container, period.

What kind of a load goes in that container? What the hell difference does that make to anybody? In many cases containers are not loaded on the docks or anywhere near the docks; some of them not even at container stations; they are loaded right at the factory.

Containers have enormous value to employers. You take an employer who is shipping electronic equipment, a lot of it fairly delicate - doesn't want to see it bounced around, wants to make sure it is packed

LG: correctly, doesn't want to get a lot of claims on breakage. He finds it a lot better to have a container delivered to the factory and have it loaded there in his way, with the necessary padding. He gets a good tight load and is also protected, not only in terms of damage, but also in terms of pilfering.

So, these things are bound to happen and some sound theoretical, but you can't overlook the residue of anger that this built up. The guys knew it was an end of an era; break bulk cargo was going.

The average man knew he wasn't going to be able to stop the container indefinitely; to go down there with a bunch of bunsen burners and destroy them as they came down wouldn't work; nothing else would work. Eventually the employers would take the bugs out of any attempt to screw it up.

Comparisons With The ILA

LG: The ILA insists that when they have container operations they still have a full longshore gang; and the rest of them just watch it; take turns in the operations. Just how true that is, I don't know; you get different accounts. While today the problem becomes more and more theoretical as the container comes along, at that time it wasn't.

Ward: Are you saying you are not sure whether the ILA got better conditions under mechanization?

LG: I don't think they did - no.

Ward: That's the general belief, I gather.

LG: The general belief was that when it came to the guaranteed annual wage they got a better deal than we did at first. It's no longer true. Initially they got a guarantee of a 40-hour week, 52 weeks out of the year, and they got a system through which a lot of the men really didn't have to work. They were just riding the gravy train, because under their dispatch system through these waterfront commission

LG: halls they had men classified in different groups - A, B, C, D, E and F. Well, let us say a guy was in the A group; the guy in the F group would be called first, and he would be the one who had to take the job. If the guy in the A group knew there wasn't going to be any job, he just went and checked in at the hall and drove his cab for the day. At first that looked good but a lot of it has been straightened out.

I guess the other feeling that developed around the west coast waterfronts was that with all these changes coming about, and with the union leadership's willingness to give up on some of these things without more of a battle - there was a determination not to accept everything.

The Guaranteed Annual Wage

LG: I think there was a developing feeling that things were going by the board too easily. The mechanization program was good, but some of the things that were let go were not good. This became more distinct when later on the mechanization program was changed over to the guaranteed annual wage, which prevails right now. The mechanization program per se is different. You have early retirement at 62. The pensions are high; a good pension.

Ward: How much is it?

LG: Four hundred and fifty dollars and Social Security. I guess they still have the bridge between 62 and 65, so it isn't as though they haven't made progress.

But something else has happened. I think people didn't read the membership right, because while there were a number of workers who felt that the guaranteed annual wage was a big deal, many of them - and I think this is still true of the vast majority of the longshoremen up and down the coast - don't want a handout; they would rather have the work. With some people the idea just never sat right that in order to pick up your guaranteed annual wage, - your pay guarantee, PGP, as they call it - you also have to pick up your unemployment insurance, where a port had

LG: unemployment. San Francisco was a good example. Also there were some men who had a completely different attitude toward work. If they never worked a day and picked up the pay guarantee, that was fine with them. And then they might pick up another little job if they wanted a bit more money. With the pay guarantee pushed up to somewhere around $12,000, $16,000 and $18,000 now, they figured if they never did any work it was okay with them.

There would be a lot of manoeuvering to get on "dead boards", boards that rarely moved, like a night dock board. Those would be men hired for dock work at night, whereas in most cases the dock work is done during the day. A guy on a night dock board might not be dispatched once a month. As far as he was concerned that was okay. The employers didn't like the idea, either because they wanted to force the people to work or force them out of the industry. They began to think of all kinds of schemes to force these men off the dead boards.

Then you saw another thing happening: the guy who wanted to work, but there wasn't enough work around in some ports. These days things have improved a little bit, but then men were lucky to get three days a week. Well, the man who got three days a week was not eligible for the pay guarantee. He was guaranteed 36 hours a week; if he got 3 days a week . . . .

Ward: Twenty-four hours?

LG: No. They get nine hours pay for eight hours work, and they are guaranteed nine hours pay. Three days a week would be 27, and four days would be 36 hours.

If a guy found his work diluted because they were dissolving a dead board, then he was all out of shape. He would say, "I don't give a goddam if that guy doesn't want to work, that's his business; let the employer pay for it. I don't want him diluting whatever work opportunity I have. I don't feel like using this guaranteed wage. Most of us looked at it to begin with as something simply to fall back on in case of a crisis - and that's all." Instead it became a way of life. There are some ports where the pay guarantee, if it is used at all, is so rare that it is almost unknown. In ports like Portland and Los Angeles, it is rare. San Francisco has had a very

LG: bad siege, a very substantial decline in work. I don't think it's because the shipping lines are passing up the port. It could be just traffic patterns, where the cargo is emanating from and where it is going.

It might be that San Francisco no longer carries the same prominence as it did before. A lot more cargo these days is moving through Los Angeles. Portland, which everybody figured would die because you have the long haul up the river, instead is prospering, doing extremely well. I think the situation warrants study.

Then other problems grew up; under the '66 agreement the employers were allowed to have steady men. The employers were arguing that these new cranes were expensive equipment; they didn't want green men on the crane on account of the possibilities of damage.

A great deal of damage could be done, particularly if somebody failed to handle a container right, or it wasn't properly slid into the cell. They wanted what they called steady men and the union agreed, based on whatever deal the employer could make with the individual man. In other words, the individual man could bargain for whatever he could get. Naturally, it would have to be above the union scale.

With the advent of steady men something else took place, the dilution of work opportunity for the other men in the hall. Let me just give you an example: Portland has container piers now and they do a lot of container work. They are all convinced that no man should work steady for an employer. So the crane drivers are all rotated through the hall; all competent men and they all do a good job.

Ward: Any member?

LG: No, not any member. Men who are qualified crane drivers; to be a qualified crane driver you take training and pass a test. No, no, you just can't walk in and say, "Okay, put me on the crane driver's job." It has to be a qualified man and they maintain this rotation.

LG: The same rotation took place in the port of Seattle, where the employers broke through in a vicious and terrible way which does a lot of harm. There's no way of looking at it happily, even though you might understand it. They got a group of black members to go steady as crane drivers - some ten.

That became a rankling issue in the local. Here's a union that fought all its life for racial equality, particularly in the business of promotions. The union had a big battle in getting blacks into the skilled categories; getting blacks, for example, to be hired as walking bosses - which we had done . These are big accomplishments and here the employers use the blacks as steady men in conflict with the rest of the guys. It is an issue that rankles.

Of course, the black man could say with just about equal right that he's been screwed out of these jobs for years; here's a chance to finally go steady and get a better break in life, and he has the right to take it. I don't think the logic holds up. I think it is far more important that he remain a good solid comrade to the guy in the hall, even though it can be said that okay, the black man still has to carry an extra burden.

I think he does, yes, because the fight isn't done until you achieve basic equality. The conflict around the steady man issue resulted in dumping the last contract just a couple of months ago in the port of San Francisco; but the ports voted for it as a whole. In the northwest local it won handily, and it passed in Los Angeles by a small majority, but San Francisco voted against it. I'd say the main reason that vote took place was because of this issue - what they call 9.43 steady men.

Well, the steady man issue became a highly symbolic thing to the employers. I can understand where they need steady men, but its real deep-going implication to the employer is that once you're able to get a steady man, this would amount to the same situation as the preferred gang before the union started.

Once you have a steady man, the loyalty of the man goes to the employer first and not to the union first. I think the men smelled it. At least, a few

LG: changes were made in the new contract which ought to improve the situation. They are forcing the employer to double the number of steady men and perhaps triple it, so as to dilute their hours. Of course, if you made every crane driver a steady man, no problem then, everything would be even-steven.

The whole principle of equalization of work opportunities is what it amounts to. We don't have equalization of earnings under the contract; we have equalization of work opportunity, the basic idea being that under the system of rotary dispatch a man took his job as his turn came along. Come the end of the year their earnings in each category would be approximately the same.

Obviously, the winch driver would have an earnings differential; but a hold man or a dock man, come the end of the year, his earnings would be the same as the others in his category. With the advent of steady men, the concept of equalization begins to go out of the window. The split is most dangerous because the men are pitted against each other, with some of the guys attached to the union and some of the guys attached to the employer.

As some of the union guys put it, "Christ Almighty, the men in the union hall are the overflow guys, and when the employers need some men in addition to the steady men, they go to the union." Quite true; there aren't that many steady men. The total number in San Francisco can't be more than 200. It sure raises hell; that's when the guys began to feel that what they called conditions . . . .

##

What Are "Conditions"?

Ward: You were just about to mention something else as the cause of complaint.

LG: Well, the longshoreman's idea of conditions is quite different from that of the average worker. The average worker feels that conditions on the job mean he's not worked too fast, he gets a decent coffee

LG: break, an adequate lunch time, there are clean rest rooms, and supervision isn't looking down his neck all the time. The longshoreman was much more independent. There is a whole background and tradition to this; an awful lot grew out of the '34 strike and the victory and all the battles that went on afterwards.

When St. Sure talked about all these so-called violations of the agreement, he wasn't so far off by his standards, but the longshoreman wasn't all that upset by it. He didn't figure it was a violation of the agreement. He said, "So, what the hell, we finally got some decent conditions; the employer is making his money, we know that; he passes it along."

Conditions included working when you pleased. If you wanted a day off, you took a day off. If you didn't feel like working that morning, so you didn't turn to. The next day you'd plug in; the low man out system, you'd take your turn if you worked.

We had guys who for years never worked the week when the horses were running; they'd work Friday night, Saturday and Sunday - figured they made themselves a paycheck with three days at overtime. Come Monday, they were down at the race track. Their way of living, that's all, and the waterfront meant that to them; other guys would work all the time. There weren't many who were mavericks to that extent.

In some of the things written by Eric Hoffer (a longshoreman whose writings have been widely published) he talks about life on the waterfront. Eric Hoffer was always a good longshoreman and a hard worker. He had a practice that before he left the job, he would build a load for the next gang; that was his token of transferring the work, rather a comradely custom. About longshoring, one of the things he wrote about was the beauty of the freedom. When he wanted a day to think, to walk through Golden Gate Park - he was writing all the time - he just took a day off to do it. This feeling of liberty is not necessarily important whether you exercise it; it's whether you <u>have</u> it.

So, these are the things a number of the guys saw slipping away from them. It became more and more the underlying cause for the flare-up in 1971, when the contract ran out; the strike was inevitable.

Ward: Well, did Harry blame you? Who got the blame for this loss of conditions?

LG: It pretty well centered around Harry and the Coast Committee. We had some bad explosions in 1961 or 1962. I think it was in 1961 or 1962 when the ILWU agreed with the PMA on something concerning workers at the east bay marine terminals - Encinal, Howard Terminal, Parr and Richmond. The workers belonged to Local 6 and they had been organized back in 1934 and '35. At that time the longshoremen didn't even want them because they were getting less than the longshore rate of pay.

Terminal workers are sort of warehousemen, and the Local 6 guys did a hell of a job in organizing them; they brought their contracts up to the same rate of pay as the longshoremen, except for the eight hour day instead of the six. The terminal operators, on the other hand, were having themselves a picnic at the expense of the shipowners, passing the bill along to them all the time. The shipowners had to use the terminals because those were where the ships went in; the areas that had the biggest dockside storage, both for assembly and discharge of cargo.

The Coast Committee made an agreement when I was out of town, or something. When I got back I found out the Committee had agreed to turn these terminal workers over to Longshore. So, I said to Harry, "Turning them over to Longshore might make sense; fundamentally they are longshoremen and have been for years; they have their pension fund, they have their dowry, the mechanization fund. But on the other hand, I'd be much opposed to turning them over unless every single thing they presently have in the way of conditions and rights, such as seniority rights and so forth, is guaranteed."

Harry said, "Well, if you don't go along with the agreement, we'll just send the longshoremen in there to do the work." And I said, "Oh, no, you don't! That's not going to happen because those longshoremen are not going to go through the terminal workers picket line; I think you know these terminal workers."

They're a very tough group - a very loyal group. Christ, you could have a beef anywhere in Oakland and whistle and all those terminal workers would be off

LG: the job in five minutes. Bob Moore and Paul Heide worked down there. So did Chili. Anyway, I wasn't going to get pushed around by that. I met with Chili and the others and said, "What do you guys think of this?" Well, they were disturbed and upset.

Ward: It's a hell of a thing, right in your own union, to get into a mess like that.

LG: Plus the fact that the terminal workers were guys who not only stuck with the union but had taken on every beef you could think of. I remember the time we had that big battle at Cal Pack . . . .

Ward: Was this Harry's idea, or was it St. Sure's idea?

LG: It was St. Sure's idea; he wanted the terminal workers . . .

Ward: And Harry went along with it?

LG: Sure, he went along with it.

Ward: Well, what did St. Sure have to gain by that?

LG: They wanted to get rid of the terminal operator - oh, the terminal operator could still operate the terminal. The employers wanted to have those guys in under the Longshore contract so as to have a degree of control over them.

Ward: The conditions were a little more favorable too from the employer's point of view, under the Longshore agreement than under the Warehouse agreement, isn't that so?

LG: The Warehouse agreement set down rules that were out of this world in terms of conditions. If, for example, a few cases had to be picked up somewhere, you'd have your forklift driver; then a warehouseman would go along with him to load those few cases on, and a clerk would go along at the same time to check them. Even when it came to discharging trucks, they had complete control.

The truck driver was given ten feet from the tail end of his truck, you see, and that's where the stuff had to be left. He couldn't move all over the place

LG: and drop his cargo just anywhere around the dock, whereas in longshore they were watching these teamsters bring down their own fork lifts, in effect using the entire dock area as their own.

Big differences there, big changes. The terminal workers had really maintained conditions over the years, so this became a very sharp point of contention. I said, "I'll take charge of the question. The issue is not whether they move over; let's get that one out of the way. I'm not going to have that kind of a fight, although if you try to force it, there will be a fight." I said, "The only thing I'm concerned about is that these men be protected." And I drafted a four-way agreement. I wouldn't recommend it to the terminal workers at all until it was signed by both the ILWU and the PMA, by Local 10, by Local 6 and finally ratified by the terminal workers; it had to be a four-way agreement so nobody could chisel out later.

Ward: It was signed by all four of them?

LG: Yes; it gave the terminal worker full seniority rights as though he had been a longshoreman from the day he started as a terminal worker. If he had twenty five years on the terminals, he went in to Longshore with 25 years.

That also meant that if there was an opening in the (ILWU Ship) Clerks - and that is also based on seniority - if he had enough seniority he could have a crack at the job. I remember later on getting some flack, completely unwarranted in my opinion; I think a lot of it was just straight Warehouse baiting, because guys like Smitty were just plain insane. Smitty (Carl Smith) would say, "We don't want those men - we just want their work." I said, "You're out of luck, that's all."

Ward: Were these black longshoremen who were bumped down on account - - ?

LG: They weren't bumped down: it just meant there was somebody in ahead of them, yes. That was the agreement made by the PMA and I was going to carry it out to the letter - not just any vague language, "men and machines may be added," or any crap like that. There was going to be firm, tight language.

LG: The document is still around and it protects the terminal workers, including setting up a terminal board.

Ward: It's almost as though you were discussing a merger between two separate unions.

LG: Damn near; I'll never forget, Harry and the Coast Committee were working on something or other and I said, "Well, I'm leaving for this meeting on the terminal workers." Harry or somebody had been talking to St. Sure, because he turned around to me, terribly angry about something, and said, "Don't you try to fuck St. Sure around on this sort of thing."

I said, "Oh, he can take care of himself." I went right ahead. I don't think I was ever quite forgiven, because Harry was that way. It was one thing, if you disagreed with him and later came back and said, "I made a mistake," and kissed his ring which he carried in his back pocket.

Ward: Was that the first serious time you crossed Harry on St. Sure?

LG: Yes. That was the first time I really crossed him. At the opening of the 1966 negotiations we got into a clash. I was going to make a motion before the Coast Committee and Harry was inviting me to make the motion, because he knew that I might get a second to it, but that it would be voted down.

St. Sure took a position in the second negotiations in 1966 that they had already paid for the mechanization agreement in '61 and they "weren't going to pay for the same refrigerator twice"; that was it. So, I took the position, "In that case, tell the employers the negotiations are finished, that's all. We'll go the hard way."

Ward: And you made the motion?

LG: No, I didn't make the motion. Harry said, "Why don't you make the motion?" But then it would have died. To make a motion that is lost, then you're worse off. That's the internal politics of the situation.

LG: I felt keenly about it and I said, "We told you at the time that nobody knew whether we got too much out of the agreement or too little; we didn't know whether the employers got the better end of the stick or the short end. That's the reason contracts are around and that's the reason they're open once in a while."

Ward: I've heard the explanation of Harry's position on the '61 mechanization agreement; he didn't realize something that St. Sure very well knew: the vast extent of the containerization program, how world-wide and how important it was going to become. Would you say that's so?

LG: That could be so. I really don't know. I don't know whether St. Sure knew, but I do know what happened.

Ward: Well, what happened?

LG: The containerization program just bloomed all of a sudden. I mean whoof!

Ward: Once they had the agreement.

LG: I don't think it had anything to do with the agreement. I think it had more to do with top-level decisions that were being made all over the world by different shipping companies in Norway, in Germany, in the United States. They were being made where all kinds of shipowners were making decisions, some of which had to be made years in advance. They're constantly making decisions; this ship has a certain number of years of life. In making a decision ten years before a ship is finished - or its normal utilization is finished and you're going to sell it off as a tramp - the decision then is what is the new vessel you order? You're not going to order a Liberty any more; is it going to be a C-3 or a container ship?

Ward: Now, you were on the negotiating committee in '61? Weren't you?

LG: Yes.

Ward: Now, did you personally have any idea of the world-wide scope of this planning you have been describing?

LG: No, I did have a feeling that mechanization was coming along and there was nothing could stop it.

Ward: But you had no idea of the scope?

LG: No; for example, the principal mechanization we saw in '61 was Matson; questions arose in our minds. I know that I started reading a lot of stuff to find out whether or not containers could be introduced in Japan.

A number of people who knew a good deal about Japan said, "We don't think so, because their highways won't take it; the streets are too narrow: how in the hell are you going to manoeuver a container around those streets?" They were quite wrong; containers were introduced in Japan on a big scale. Everything coming from Japan now is in containerized vessels.

Ward: Well, all right, so you weren't aware of the scope. Would you say it is safe to assume that St. Sure was aware of the potential scope?

LG: He might have known more - yes; but a labor relations guy for the employers isn't necessarily privy to all their executive discussions. Shipowners in many ways are very cagey. They go to great efforts to keep certain trade secrets away from other employers.

For example, somebody came along with the idea of the LASH ships. That's sort of a big barge aboard ship. It's not a barge in the small sense of the word; it carries about 800 tons. The barge is loaded, the ship is enormous. I don't know how many feet it runs, but it must be well over 300 feet.

It has two huge lifts at the ass end of the ship. These barges come alongside, are pushed in by a tug and picked up with these lifts. They go inside the ship on rollers, one barge after the other. I went down there not too many years ago when PFE (Pacific Far East) had introduced the LASH ships, and I happened to be talking to Bob Pfeiffer, head of Matson, a very smart shipowner and operator. I asked, "What do you think of the ships?" "You couldn't give them to me," he said.

LG: Here was an outfit that had been in containers all these years; they were not too happy with their 24-foot containers because they could not be made universal. They had ventured into a joint understanding with the Japanese. They taught the Japanese the container method, at which point Matson thought they would be operating out of Japan.

Only one small thing happened; Matson discovered that the cargo disappeared. Japanese employers are so goddam tight that once they had picked up the container technique - and they were very friendly about all this; I'm sure they thanked Matson and took them out to dinners - when it came to soliciting cargo, the Japanese went to Japanese. All Matson got was a lot of experience and nothing more . . .

Ward: And a lot of dinners?

LG: And a lot of dinners. Whether St. Sure knew the proportions of . . .

Ward: Well, what I'm trying to get at is whether he withheld information deliberately to insure his success in negotiations; anything a little bit tricky.

LG: Yes, let's say he knew all that. I would not expect him to tell us all that across the table.

Ward: If Harry ever suspected that he did, at least Harry didn't resent it?

LG: Oh, on that sort of thing I think Harry had an intelligent approach to negotiations. He didn't see negotiations as the employers coming in with a Bible on which they had to take an oath of honesty. He figured they were in there to do the best job they could; and the union's job was to do the best job we could.

If the employer happens to take a screwing, well, that's our good luck; the other way around, well, win some, lose some. It's a much more salutary way of looking at negotiations than this business of getting morally indignant because the employer is being a bad man. What is he anyway, an angel?

Ward: But I got the impression a while ago that you were saying "Well, if we didn't get enough in '61, we'll do something about it in '66," and here is St. Sure . . .

LG: That's the reason I got so pissed off in '66 when they said they were not going to pay for that refrigerator a second time.

Ward: He didn't pay for it the second time, did he?

LG: Oh, they had to pay for it another way . . . .

Ward: What other way?

LG: The first mechanization program provided a fund of $29,000,000, which included the so-called "down payment" prior to 1961 of $1,500,000. Of the $29,000,000, a portion was set aside for pensions and a cash payout to pensioners of $7,900. By 1966 the wage guarantee portion of the fund, not having been used, was divided among the "A" men, with each man getting $1,300. The 1966 agreement included improvements in pension, as well as an increase in payout on retirement. But later we phased out the cash payout and moved into the pay guarantee plan. So they did have to pay for the refrigerator again.

But, as to whether they paid enough, is another story. A lot of the members felt the employers had never paid enough, which is understandable. Here is a group of longshoremen; they see a vessel and they know that ordinarily it was an eight-day job, or something like that, with regular handling of cargo.

Now they see the cranes and everything else and know that that ship is going to be turned around in less than 24 hours. It'll be in and out, and then there's the next job to be looked for. So, there's bound to be a very deep-seated feeling that the employers have gotten an awful lot out of this thing; and no matter how much the men get, it's not enough.

I think that is a by-product of change. I don't think you're ever going to completely change the thinking of people on that score. You might under a socialist society, where the benefits come in other forms - and they do come in some other forms.

Other things happened, too, in other words, some of these things - these freedoms longshoremen saw going down the drain because of the pay guarantee. You had to be available, be down at the hall, work or no work, a certain number of days. A lot of the

LG: men resented the loss of freedom of movement; taking off days, working when they pleased. It was more difficult in a place like San Francisco, where the work was slim pickings. If you were going to pick up a pay guarantee, you had to be down there every day. No longer could you take just weekends or four days; the work was not as easily available.

There was what really amounted to surplus men, in the case of San Francisco. We registered far more longshoremen in San Francisco than was necessary. A lot of the guys, particularly the old-timers, felt that this was something that was done because St. Sure wanted it. The employers wanted it, so we registered that many more men.

Ward: Did Harry have any control over it or was that Local 10's business - the extra registration?

LG: No; actually the Coast Committee has a lot to do with it, because when a longshoreman is registered now he gets coast-wise registration.

Ward: I see, so then Harry did have something to do with it?

LG: Yes, he did; he went along with the idea. They registered 750 men at one crack; you remember the lines; my god, some 5,000 applicants turned up. Everybody wanted to be a longshoreman; big pay and good work.

Ward: And you say that this was part of St. Sure's program?

LG: Yes, he wanted the extra men. At that particular time maybe the work was good. It was for a little while, but it fell off. Other ports handled the thing much more wisely and much more slowly - they didn't agree to so many registrations, the net result being that they are not as badly off.

In other words, internicine quarreling takes place the moment work is short. If work is good in any port, the mechanization agreement doesn't mean much. If work is plentiful and good, the guys are fairly well satisfied.

Ward: It's interesting; I can see why St. Sure wanted it, but I can't see why Harry went along.

LG: I don't know why he went along. At that phase of the game, Harry was pretty well going along with everything St. Sure wanted; at least it struck me that way.

Ward: I've heard you say that so far as Harry was concerned, St. Sure could do no wrong.

LG: Just about. St. Sure could charm the birds out of the trees. He was a very likeable scoundrel.

Ward: Well, do you think we have fairly well covered that relationship?

LG: I think so. To Harry, the pay guarantee was one of the biggest achievements in the world. He can't understand, for example, how anybody can object to that last longshore agreement. Most of his remarks were "How can anybody object?" Look at what the pay guarantee is going up to; it's a substantial hunk of dough.

Ward: About $18,000 now?

LG: Yep; well, he kept saying, "How can they object to that?" I think what Harry is missing completely is while that may be acceptable to some of the guys, there is a hard core of simply unreconstructible militants. These are guys whose philosophy of life is leftwing, anti-capitalist. They may have to adjust to the system because that's where you get your paycheck, but they sure as hell don't think with it in any manner, shape or form.

And they know the other things that go on. They see that pay guarantee as a control on their freedom. If the longshoremen were angry about something, they walked off the job; if there was an un-American Activities Committee in town that they figured was ripping up our union, all of a sudden there were 3,000 longshoremen in front of City Hall. I don't think that made the un-American Activities Committee very happy.

Ward: This way of thinking and acting is not confined to American longshoremen; it's pretty much world wide and has been for hundreds of years.

LG: It's a chronic trait among longshoremen all over the world; longshoremen are a lot more internationally minded because they are in contact with international workers all the time; seamen from different parts of the world . . .

Ward: That was how you won the '48 strike . . .

LG: Yes, the '48 strike was a big thing, but the showdown you're referring to came in Washington, D.C. in 1946.

Ward: That's right - '46.

LG: Yes, and all that support from all over the world. You're right; it's a very common thing.

Like that funny incident; my wife and I took a trip on an Israeli ship. We had to pick it up in Montreal and I was way under the weather and was taking some time off. I managed to grab this ship because it was going to Israel and I wanted to spend a few days looking around.

Well, we left Montreal late, towards winter, so we were stuck there about a week. Luckily the skipper on the ship turned out to be a guy I'd met before; he was both translator, friend, chess companion and guide - a great guy named Aaron Stark.

Ward: He was the guy who helped you out in Genoa?

LG: Yes, so I asked him one day, "I'd like to have some of the longshoremen for lunch." He said, "Great, bring them here for lunch. Anything we can do, you know, to make friends with these guys . . .

Ward: What port was this?

LG: Genoa. So, we bring them down to the ship and they're all sitting with their backs to the portholes and I'm sitting together with Stark and Terry. The longshoremen are a sort of a tri-partite group; the leadership is divided between Social Democrats, Communists, and people who are neither.

One guy, very tough, obviously the Communist of the group, knew a lot about the operation and I told him, "You know we were tied up in the stream there

LG: for three or four days." And he said, "Well, it's your fault; you could have sent us a telegram and we would have sent a boat out." I asked, "Why was the ship tied up?" "Oh, we had a little bit of a strike on." "Why?" "Well, mostly it had to do with the men working nights before the holidays; they wanted holiday time." I said, "Is everything straightened out now?" He said, "Oh, yeah, sure; there are no problems of any kind and the port is working fine." And I'm looking out the porthole and there they use - gantry cranes on the dock. It's not yet 12 o'clock - nowhere near it, about 11:30. We were having drinks, about to have lunch, and I see the guys climbing down the gantry cranes; one after the other, they're stopping.

And I turn to this guy and I say, "Everything's settled now - everything is fine?" "Oh, yeah, yeah." I said, "Well, how come all those guys are walking off the ship?" He turns around; he knew what was going on, clear as a bell; these guys had some beef which hadn't been settled yet, and all the union officials were aboard our ship. "Okay, fellas, now do you understand what we're saying?" (laughter)

XXII END OF AN ERA

(Interview 30: 17 October, 1978)

Conventional Operations Disappear

Ward: Lou, when you were discussing the effects on the longshoremen of the Guaranteed Annual Wage you had something more to add to that.

LG: Yes, I mentioned some of the side effects; part of it, I think, was done with honest intentions but without recognition of a certain basic fact - the work habit of the longshoremen in meeting the hook in regard to the size of the load. I think there could have been much more stringent protection of the men in conventional operations: it's true, however, that the conventional operations were also disappearing very quickly. As a matter of fact, as of this time, conventional operation is an exception, not the rule.

One of the other factors that arose before long was not just a question of availability. A whole series of disputes arose; some of them were resolved so that in the event men walked off the job - as they had done before because they felt the work wasn't being handled right or because it was unsafe - they could walk off rather than continue and risk life or limb. In matters of safety there were certain improvements.

There was a provision written in the contract on onerous work; if they considered the job onerous they could work around it until the arbitrator got down there and made a ruling.

LG: But if the men walked off a ship or stopped work for whatever reason, initially the employers would attempt to penalize the entire port. I think it has been narrowed down so that the penalty doesn't apply to all the longshoremen, but it does apply in terms of eligibility for the pay guarantee of the men involved.

Well, when work in a port is good, that doesn't make much never-mind, because they're not going to draw the pay guarantee anyway. If there is a lot of work in the port and for one reason or another they have to stop for some protest or demonstration, they're just going to stop; the work is there anyway and they're going to earn more than the pay guarantee would provide.

However, where work was not good, where men were getting three days a week, or four at the most, then penalizing them could be a very heavy deterrent to taking any stop-work action.

Ward: I think you said that stop-work for any cause had virtually disappeared from the waterfront, compared to what it used to be.

LG: Yes, there are still the stop-work meetings; those that are provided for under the contract.

Ward: But not the spontaneous things?

LG: The spontaneous walk-offs, the demonstrations. I recall when we had this big mass meeting in front of the Federal building at the time of the bombing in Birmingham. Such things became more and more of a rarity, practically unknown. Some of the actions taken by the longshoremen, like the refusal to handle cargo to Chile after the assassination of President Allende, were a bit difficult to implement because of the penalty provisions involved.

It's understandable; the employers were insistent on that for obvious reasons - they were not going to pay a guarantee to men and have them off for several days during a political demonstration.

As to how you weigh these things; what it does to the whole historical background of the longshoreman, the tradition of the equalization of work,

LG: the high degree of democracy, the willingness to walk off the job and exercise their economic power; as to how you measure these things over the long pull, I guess the best way to judge is to see how things change as the years go by.

But it is a new era; longshoring is just not the same as it used to be. The container has made unbelievable changes, and also in the handling of large pre-fabricated loads, such as lumber. The industry was bound to change; whether these changes would result in a kind of work force that was more highly subjected to discipline, more comparable to an ordinary factory job, would be an important determinant.

How you measure that is hard to say. Some of the old timers just simply say, "Well, it's the end of an era - that's all." Their right to walk off the job; in many cases the discipline was moderate or almost non-existent.

Ward: Well, the contracts didn't give them the right to walk off, did they?

LG: No.

Ward: They didn't penalize them, either?

LG: Not to speak of, particularly where the union felt that these walk-offs were called for. Sure, some of these things might have been done with a bit of . . . .

Ward: Whimsical?

LG: No, not whimsical. In some cases you had that, yes, but when you had all these scrap iron beefs - those were not whimsical at all. Sure there might have been an understanding; the Chinese understood very quickly because they realized if there was a picket line down there, the men wouldn't go to work. That didn't take a lot of communication or conviction of anybody; the way the Chinese community felt about the Japanese invasion was so strong, you were bound to get these demonstrations.

Whether these things were by-products of the nature of the industry as it was constructed at that time is another question. Were they an

LG: aberration in the history of American trade unionism? These are questions that are hard to weigh; it's also a serious question, open to discussion, as to whether all the emphasis should have gone as it finally did to the question of pay guarantees - PGP.

It's true, the hourly rate had gone up very substantially, particularly in the last contract, a good contract, by and large. On the question of steady men, I think the union has begun to find the road back.

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LG: During those years - 1957 and 1958 - as I recall, there were very intensive discussions. As a matter of fact around one of those contracts - it might have been the 1957 contract or '58 - there was a sharp division in the union on just cutting the workday down from nine to eight hours.

The way the longshore gangs were handled up and down the coast up until that time, it was generally assumed they worked a nine-hour shift. During the day you worked six hours straight time and three hours at overtime; at night it was a nine-hour shift, all at overtime. That's the way the longshore contract reads - there's only six straight time hours in a day; that was the maximum.

After hectic discussion in negotiations and with our own committee, there was general agreement that the main push ought to be to cut the workday and the first move had to be from nine to eight. During this period Harry kept hammering, I thought, very correctly and with good sound trade unionism behind it, that the important thing was to cut the workday.

Ward: That was also because you had the surplus membership at that time, didn't you?

LG: Not particularly. There was a problem of surplus membership for a short while in San Francisco at the end of World War II, but that problem had been resolved. The ratio between the size of the work force and the work was in a fairly good balance.

Ward: Why were you cutting down the hours of work, then?

LG: That's where I think Harry was very much on the beam. What had happened, particularly during wartime, was that the guys had gotten accustomed to getting in a lot of overtime work; a lot of overtime pay. This can become a real, insidious, habit-forming thing where, in effect, the guy is living on overtime. He assumes that overtime is part of his paycheck.

I recall discussions in the longshore caucus where good guys - like Gordon Giblin from Los Angeles - were arguing, shortly after the war, that the men couldn't afford to take vacations at the regular 36 or 40 hours pay; they were accustomed to making much more. He said, "Why, just to cover our regular bills takes more than that."

This can become a real sickness, you know. It can eat into the whole psychology of guys, particularly where you start chasing that buck, with the emphasis we have in this country on material things. These were serious arguments.

A night man - they used to be called "sun dodgers" - was accustomed to working nights all the time, nine hours every night; sometimes an extra hour, because a ship had to sail or shift. That man at the end of the week has worked five or six days; all overtime hours.

You then talk of his vacation; one of the things we always fought for was that when you got a vacation, you took a vacation. You were absolutely prohibited from working longshore. You got these rumbles all the time, "Look, I've got a hardship case; I need money. Why can't I just collect my vacation pay?"

These were things the union fought against very strenuously. So, it was either in '56 or '57, thereabouts, when the contract provided finally for cutting down the normal work day - with certain exceptions - from nine to eight hours. The coastwise vote on that was very close - it passed by only a few hundred votes. To the guys that meant a cut in pay, even though we got a pay increase

LG: at the time. Maybe it didn't quite make up every nickel of the loss, but it approximately did.

The Shorter Work Week

LG: Harry's position was that cutting the hours of work is an issue that should be handled on merits. The slogans that you see around such as "30 hours work with 40 hours pay" are really misleading. Anybody is in favor of that; anybody who is working a regular job, 40 hours, eight hours a day, just raise the slogan "Let's cut back the hours to 30 hours"; unless the man is out of his mind, why should he want to work 40 when he can work 30 and be done?

But that's not the way it works out; the moment you put the issue in that form then you in effect say that you've got to get the 40 hours pay before you can cut the number of hours of work. If the labor movement had followed in that direction indefinitely, I doubt if the work week would ever have been cut.

In the initial eight-hour day movement, the program was eight hours work, eight hours rest, eight hours leisure; a cut to eight hours. From a trade union point of view, once you cut the hours of work, they just automatically take care of themselves; there's bound to be a push to get that lost money up there so there is an adequate income at the end of the shorter work day.

In longshore we also got what was called a "short shift"; where the employer wanted to get more than 16 hours of work out of a day, he could call in a short shift. That was a shift that worked for five hours from, say, 2 a.m. to 7 a.m. and then got paid for nine hours work; in other words, a rate slightly higher than even the overtime rate.

Ward: They must want to have the work done pretty badly to pay that kind of wages.

LG: Only when they wanted to ship out in a hurry, you see. Fundamentally, as far as the employer is concerned, that ship only makes money when it's on the high seas. Once in port, it's losing money, so the turn-around speed on a vessel is very important.

I haven't kept close track in recent years, but I would say the cost of keeping a vessel in port an extra day must be somewhere at least between seven and eight thousand dollars; so that the bit of additional money in wages in a short shift, to save that seven or eight thousand dollars didn't make much difference.

In 1958 there was a big push up and down the coast; a lot of discussions - stop-work meetings. There was a stop-work meeting in San Francisco and the guys were all asked to bring their lunches with them. This was a joint meeting of ship clerks, longshoremen and, I think, walking bosses, where a program was finally adopted that the big push would be for a six-hour day and a 30-hour week, plus a substantial increase in pay.

Ward: And no normal overtime?

LG: The whole objective was to just cut the workday.

Ward: The 30-hour week really meant the 30-hour week?

LG: Initially, back in 1934, this was said to be a dream of the longshoremen. If you could get 30 hours of work a week, that would be great; if he could get a buck an hour, which was the demand, that meant $30 bucks a week; he had it made. But things corrupted themselves; the employers kept the men working eight hours, with two hours overtime. Pretty soon, in one of the contracts, once a man was put to work, he had to be given eight hours; so you had compulsory overtime.

Ward: Then, it was nine hours after that?

LG: Then the work shift became nine hours by custom, not by contract; the employers wanted to keep the nine hours because then they got 18 hours of work on the vessel.

Ward: Well, talking from the employer's point of view, the longer the day the less the productivity of the man, isn't it? That last hour or two, I would think the productivity would be low.

LG: Some of the studies have indicated that; and some don't necessarily bear that out. Let me explain why - a lot depends on the cargoes you are handling. Let's say it's containers; productivity is not going to differ the last hour from the first hour, because the crane is doing the work. It's all by machine. Sure, there might be a bit of a slowing down, putting those containers under the crane, but by and large it wouldn't make that much difference.

The fact is the workday cut was excellent, a very worthwhile and educational thing.

Ward: Well, what came out of this thirty-hour week meeting you had?

LG: They adopted unanimously a program for a 6-hour day, a 30-hour week and a substantial increase in pay.

Ward: And how long ago was that?

LG: 1957 or '58 -

Ward: But they are still working eight hours?

LG: Right. It fell by the wayside later on. The more we looked into the thing the more we found out; all right, we can't cut the work day to six hours, why not cut it to seven? You would think there should be an appeal, even to the employers, for a seven hour day. Let me explain why. If you are working say, three seven-hour shifts, that's 21 hours. You allow a lunch hour for each shift because working through without lunch, in my opinion, is absolutely impermissable -

Ward: I think it's against the law, too.

LG: Well, no, you have certain penalty rates the employers have to pay in the event they work more than five hours without a meal. I think the whole principle of working seven hours without a meal is

LG: very bad business, very bad on the man and very bad in terms of the psychology of the industry. But if you had three seven hour shifts, each one taking a lunch break of an hour, that would make 24 hours. You'd say, "Now, that is the most logical thing in the world - why don't the employers support something like that?" Three seven-hour shifts. The ship then would get the maximum number of hours of operation.

But we found out that there were other factors involved which don't meet the simplicity with which I put the issue. To the employers, this meant additional supervision; hiring a whole additional crew for supervision.

It also met with a great deal of resistance among the supervisors because people like the walking bosses or super-cargoes got considerable benefits in the extended work shift. Even today, with the general eight hour day, they get overlap time - an hour before and an hour after. Coming to the transfer of work from one crew to another, there could be a good deal of resistance from that end too; those workers also are in a fairly high income bracket.

It also meant adding supervision all the way up the layers, and that might have been one of the major factors as far as the employers were concerned. Whether it also extended as far back as the offices, and to what degree, I'm not sure.

I'm sure it had some effect as to the teamsters and delivery of cargo; as to whether one part of the cargo movement could be placed on a straight seven hour day while other sections were not. There might have been other problems as well.

The resistance continued by the employers and the eight-hour day did not come easy; eventually the drive for the six-hour day fell by the wayside, which I think is unfortunate. In more recent years there hasn't been much talk of the six-hour day.

A number of guys were prepared to fight for the seven-hour day and the three seven-hour shifts if necessary, but three seven-hour shifts with the

LG: limitation of work to seven-hour periods. That would be a distinct counter-balance to mechanization. Very clear; you simply have to add another shift; you have to add one man for every two men.

If you have two shifts, each working an eight with an extended hour, say nine, eighteen hours of work, then you don't necessarily add more men.

The moment you go on straight three seven-hour shifts, then the only way you can do that, if you don't allow doubling back - a gang coming back and continuing on another shift which, unfortunately, is still being done in a couple of ports like Tacoma - then the extra shift literally means adding additional men. You're putting the tax on the machine for adding additional men to the work force and for cutting the work day, which obviously ought to be one of the things to come out of mechanization.

The retirement plan is a good plan, the "mech" agreement, I think, basically was sound. The lump sum payment was perfectly sound; the reduction of the normal retirement age down to 62 is a good thing; the "bridge", an additional amount of money between age 62 and normal retirement at 65 for social security factors - all these things are good.

The one thing missing in the whole picture - and I think it not only applies to longshore, but eventually to all industry - is the length of the workday. My own observations are that the drastic change in the productivity of the individual, the enormous stepping up of capital investments brings on the result that at this moment I doubt if you could put everybody in this country to work on an eight hour day, 40 hours a week. The productive capacity is so enormous, I don't know where that total output would go.

I think that the fight for the shorter work day is without question the highest priority of the labor movement. The break-through hasn't come, except in a very few industries.

The Auto Workers have tried to tackle the issue, with longer vacations and sabbaticals; they figure that instead of trying to fight through - which I

LG: had hoped they would - on the shorter work day, they shifted the fight to the shorter work year. I don't think it has any impact at all when it comes to doing something about unemployment.

The only thing I know of that the trade union movement can do in the field of putting people to work is to cut the work day. Here is something that is within its economic power. Anything else is just a makeshift arrangement; sort of a stop-gap, a CETA* program.

Sure, there are other ways of providing employment. Some of the recent studies done on the amount of money spent on military - leaving aside the moral questions - show that the amount of money spent on military does not provide the kind of work opportunity or the hours of employment that the same money would provide in other areas, which are equally essential: building hospitals, building roads, or what have you.

This is what is behind what are called "transfer amendments" in Washington, D. C.; the object is to transfer a certain amount of money out of the military budget into the kind of work that is provided for through federal taxation, but which is far more labor-intensive.

These are some remarks on the by-products of the mechanization program. The fact of the shorter work day, as of this moment, appears to be in hiatus. In my opinion, it will pick up again, although it's a very hard thing to fight for in periods of inflation; every hour of overtime counts; certainly the guy needs it. It is quite different from the ordinary period where the worker sees, through union's strength, a gradual picking up of the standard of living.

Ward: But if we get a touch of deflation, then?

LG: Then you might have some talk about it, a lot more push. But for the moment, there's no question that the inflationary pressures create a certain

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*Comprehensive Employment Training Act

LG: atmosphere within the labor movement that makes it very rough to fight for shorter hours. We've even had debates with some of our own members in Warehouse. Somebody was telling me about a big argument that went on at National Gypsum, one of the places we have organized, where the employers wanted to add a third shift and the guys were opposed to it. Why? Because they were getting about 11 hours on each shift; sure they were making pretty good dough, but they were sure busting their ass to do it. And a lot of that is hard work.

Ward: Gypsum is rather heavy stuff, as I recall?

LG: Sure, it's heavy stuff, although a lot of it is handled by machine now. Oh, when we're talking about a place like National Gypsum, one of their main products is gypsum board, the stuff you see used in housing. Almost all present housing doesn't use wood panels anymore; they use gypsum board.

Ward: Warehousing is more akin to factory work than longshore work?

LG: Much more; part of warehousing these days is factory work, the part that's not the traditional warehouse. A few places are; Woolworth's is a traditional warehouse, where you are constantly order-filling, shipping the stuff, carrying inventories, and what have you. Genuine distribution warehouses, public warehouses, there are only a few of them left.

A good deal of warehouse organization these days, particularly in areas like coffee, are all production or semi-production warehouses. A place like Best Foods is a production warehouse; the gypsum plants are; so that the nature of the membership itself begins to change. More and more of it is factory. Blake, Moffitt and Towne, an old-time paper house, or Zellerbach's, are still traditional types of warehouses.

Ward: I wonder if it is worthwhile going back a minute to discuss the difference between the '61 and '66 mechanization agreements. You indicated, I gathered, that you didn't quarrel too much with the employers on the '61 agreement, primarily because of the understanding that if you obviously deserved more

Ward: money than you got in '61, you could raise the question again in '66. And then in '66 Mr. St. Sure said that he didn't want to pay twice for the same refrigerator, and at that point you took umbrage at his position, didn't you? How did that express itself?

LG: Oh, I think I mentioned to you that at one meeting I was just about to make a motion saying that we just break off negotiations.

Ward: Is that the one where you couldn't get a second?

LG: I could have gotten a second. The motion was never put - rather than come out on the short end of the stick.

Ward: In making that motion - in even thinking about it - you were in effect opposing Harry, weren't you?

LG: Pretty much so, because Harry felt the thing could be negotiated out. I also felt that some of the things we had coming under the '61 agreement had not been forthcoming. For example, one of the things as I understood the '61 agreement - and I believe the committee did too as a whole - was that once we agreed to permit the introduction of mechanization and the elimination of unnecessary men, we would retain other protections.

One Crucial Word

LG: There was some disagreement on such issues as what happens to extra large loads; whether men or machines "may" be added or "must" be added. Even though it is only one word, there can be a very fundamental difference. It might be giving the employers too much of a free hand, which I think did materialize. There was an awful lot of cutting of corners by the employers.

We agreed to the modernization of the industry and the advent of the container. Perhaps we didn't judge exactly the speed or the degree with which it would take place, the rapidity . . . .

Ward: The scope of it?

LG: The scope has become universal, and applied not only to containers but even things like logs, where you have cranes that can pick up 45 tons of logs. Even though we might not have measured that perfectly, there was still a basic understanding that whatever work was left on the docks was to be longshore work.

That is a very fundamental thing, one of the reasons around which the terminal workers had to be switched over; which became another source of contention, separate from the agreement itself.

Under the '61 agreement, as I recall, even the loading of a truck had to be in a certain specified area like on an apron outside on the loading dock; any use of the forklift around the waterfront would be longshore jobs. Some of it sounds jurisdictional and some is; you can say that this is make-work; well, some of it is and some of it isn't.

I recall lengthy discussions with the Teamsters, because by that time, I began to know them quite well because that had begun earlier, with my initial meetings with Hoffa which go back to 1956 in Hawaii. Our attitude was that if the Teamsters figure that they're going to lose out on any work because of these palletized loads - a truck could be discharged very quickly by using a forklift - then they should move for a mechanization program. You could take a load off a flat-bed truck in 15 or 20 minutes with ease.

We were determined that we would keep the work for longshoremen because it was work that was being done around the dock. Talking to Teamster guys like Ted Merrill, who led the fight against the Longshore agreement, I said, "The only thing for you guys to do is to just catch the employers at the other end; in other words, this mechanization is not just affecting us. The palletized load that is made up in the cannery and goes into that truck - bang, bang, bang! is going to come off the truck the same way - palletized loads, all made up that is not going to affect just the longshoremen, it means the teamsters too." That means that the teamster's rig can be loaded in 15 or 20 minutes at the warehouse or the cannery or wherever he's going.

LG: He can make that many more trips a day; that's big money, of course, for the guy who owns the truck. Our attempt was to pressure the Teamsters into following a similar program of making the machine compensate for some of the impact of mechanization on the men affected.

But the Teamsters never quite went that way. Hoffa made one move in that direction when he put a tax on trucks that were piggy-backed; piggy-backs came into operation at that time. In other words, there was a whole revolutionary change in material handling; it was not limited to one aspect of the industry.

Many employers found it more profitable to take the whole chassis, including the load of freight on it, and shove it on a freight-car; even if they were big ones, two could get on one flat car; you would see these strings of a hundred freight cars going cross country. I'm thinking about the piggy-backs; they figured that in terms of wear and tear, drivers and everything else, the cost compared to transporting cross-country on piggy-back was profitable. That's where Sea-Land went into the whole area of containerization.

What happened was that there were some sharp arguments, after the '61 agreement, with the Teamsters. There were some stoppages of work in San Francisco, particularly around the coffee operation. They maintained that making up the load of coffee on the dock was their work, including putting the pallet board on the truck, so then they would bring down their own forklifts.

I recall a meeting we had with Einar Mohn over at the Palace Hotel on this issue. I recall Harry was there. I'm sure members from the Coast Committee, both Howard Bodine and L. B. Thomas, were there. I maintained, among other things, that the real beef from the Teamsters was not coming from the drivers ....

Ward: Coming from the lumpers?

LG: Right; and the lumpers are a breed of their own. Even in Warehouse we found ourselves in some pretty serious clashes. I recall during a crisis stage in

LG: one of our negotiations some of the business agents of Local 85, the drivers' local, were going around to the warehouses telling the employers they must hire a lumper to load that truck.

That was work we were doing. If a driver wanted to load himself, fine. If the driver wanted help, the warehouseman would help him. In some cases, if the driver just left the chassis, then the warehouseman handled it, the attitude of the warehouseman being that if the driver just drops the chassis, let us say, to pick up another load and drive it somewhere else, then we considered it to be the same as a freight car.

It was there, stationary, without a driver connected to it; that was warehouse work. There, the Teamster warehousemen were completely united with us in telling Local 85 to back off. They were just as tough as any of our people in their determination to maintain their jurisdiction. The employers tried to use it; there are all kinds of angles on this thing.

In the case of longshore, a number of these things were eroded very quickly -

Ward: Under the '61 agreement?

LG: Right. In the session with Einar Mohn I kept emphasizing, "The real beef coming here is from the lumper. The moment work slows up a bit they go shopping around all over town looking for any kind of a job they can pick up from somebody else; that's just the nature of the thing. Then they go back screaming to the business agent - they have nothing else to do and they are the ones who sit around the Teamster hall screaming at the business agent, 'Look, you s.o.b., why don't you go out and get work for us?'" So, the pressure is there from the lumpers.

Ward: The pressure is that the labor force is greater than the work need.

LG: In the case of the teamsters it was; the lumper literally did extra work. The way he picked up a pay check, he might hang around one of the big warehouses or the docks where some of the long-haul drivers come in. A guy comes in with a big load; he's been on the road eight or ten hours -

Ward: And there are a couple of guys waiting for him . . .

LG: And he wants time off and here are a couple of guys who say, "Don't you think you ought to have a lumper?" If they think they have to pressure the guy, they pressure him. The teamster at that point wasn't particularly opposed to having a lumper; why should he be? He wanted some rest, he wanted coffee, a drink, anything; just some time off, his kidneys had been banged around for eight hours. That's how your lumper started making a buck. Later on they attached lumpers to some places permanently; they were there all the time.

These things were by-products, and a lot of them disappeared with the container, which by-passes all these operations. The container comes down to the dock and is taken off with a special piece of equipment that is run by a longshoreman. A straddle truck is used; sometimes they pile containers one on top of the other if they don't have the space, and they move the containers on a special chassis under the hook. Of course, when an operation like that comes along, all these other things I'm talking about disappear. Instead of these things materializing, full blown, they were whittled away.

There was some blame put on the San Pedro (ILWU) local because they backed away from the issue by observing a Teamster picket line, not against their employers but against the longshoremen.

So, I remember Einar Mohn's attitude was, "Well, I guess we'll have to give them absolution." Einar Mohn was a little more far-seeing; he realized that the day of the lumper was a hangover of times long gone.

So, the '61 agreement achieved certain positive results in the mechanization agreement, and at least was an attempt to meet the issue of mechanization without fighting a completely defensive fight until it destroyed you, as happened to many other unions, like the Railroad Firemen.

There was an attempt at least to grapple with the issue and use union power to get a piece of the machine. I think those aspects of it were good, but the degree of change which we allowed was excessive; we did not get all the things we thought we were entitled to under the agreement.

Ward: You seem to be saying that the agreement advanced the cause of the employer more than it advanced the cause of the worker.

LG: I don't know how you measure those things.

Ward: In other words, the union lost something?

LG: I think the union gave up more than it should have; it did not get all it was fundamentally entitled to, such as recapturing all work on the waterfront. The failure to keep a rein on conditions to the degree it could have done created real havoc among our people. On that score, I was looking forward to the '66 agreement as the time where we could make a lot of changes.

As a matter of fact, there was a period where we went through the whole matter of jurisdiction and work on the waterfront. There were some major tie-ups. The whole port of Portland went down and stayed down. The whole Columbia River went down.

There was an attempt on the part of the employers to lease off a part of the port to some sort of auto-handling. The attitude of the longshoremen up there was simple; it's inside the longshore area, the work is ours, and that's the way it will be. Well, in some places they made it stick; in some places perhaps not to the same degree.

This became a big issue and was still kicking around as late as 1969; by that time we were under the second mechanization agreement. Of course, there was also the shift over then from the mechanization agreement to the PGP, the pay guarantee plan, as well as a change in the pension agreement.

Fundamentally, I don't think the guys lost anything as against the cash-payout on the mechanization agreement and the new pensions they secured. But my general feeling in '66 was that we just didn't get enough and some of the things we were supposed to get, we didn't get.

Ward: Well, did that change your relationship with St. Sure?

LG: Not particularly.

Ward: It wasn't buddy-buddy at any time?

LG: No - no; I got along all right with St. Sure.

Ward: Well, you said you didn't think it would be fair to say that St. Sure's program was deliberately intended to destroy the Longshore union. In view of all you have described here, would you now feel that it would be fair to say . . . .

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XXIII THAT CHARMING SCOUNDREL

A Bigger Share Of The Pie

Ward: Would it be fair to say that St. Sure, with the cooperation of Bridges, had with some success attempted to amend or reform the Longshore union more according to the needs and desires of the employers?

LG: What I was trying to get across at that point, Estolv, was that St. Sure had decided, either because he was on top of the '48 strike or he learned his lessons extremely well, that any effort in the direction of trying to destroy the union was a basic mistake.

Secondly, I think he figured that the whole atmosphere that prevailed prior to 1948, a running battle with the employers, was a mistake. I think St. Sure was determined to see to it that the contract was lived up to; that his attitude towards any employer trying to chisel on a contract would be one of considerable impatience.

What St. Sure proceeded to do, I'd say that he accomplished, to some extent. What he did succeed in doing was to create an atmosphere in which it was easier to deal. If ever there were indications that the union was right, in many cases he would give it the benefit of the doubt.

I might have mentioned such an issue as in-lieu worktime where the men would put in a claim for work that they should have performed that was done by some over-ambitious sea captain who decided to uncover the hatches before the ship got into port so he could

LG: save a little time and a little money for the shipowner. Claims of that sort were generally honored. On all those scores St. Sure followed a very consistent policy.

This at the same time led to something else which doesn't make St. Sure out a scoundrel *per se* but led to a situation where he could say, "Look, we're holding up our end of the bargain - now there are some things to which we're entitled in the way of 'conformance and performance," where his objective really was to push the union into a more acceptable mold.

I think I began to tell you something that is really my philosophy, not necessarily related directly to St. Sure. Somebody in our office had taken a poster put out by the AFL-CIO and put it in the conference room where negotiations were going on, so that all the guys would see it.

It was one of these posters put out by the AFL-CIO and it read, "We don't want a bigger share of the pie; we just want the same share of a bigger pie." Many unions figure their job is to get as best they can their share of the general increased productivity. Well, that is not my thinking. I always thought the job of a union was to get a bigger share of the pie. I think St. Sure knew that.

Ward: I think you said that the union provided an acceptable legal way of sharing the wealth.

LG: The main job of the union is to redistribute the wealth. You can say it's one of the few legal ways - we're not going out and using a gun - but the power to strike, organize effectively and build a rank and file union that understands the issues and is willing to fight for a larger and larger share is something that you do have the right to do; that's legal.

I still feel that's part of the job of a union; namely, to re-distribute the wealth. When people used to ask me "What's your job?", I'd say "My job is to redistribute the wealth." I recall some chap on a plane who asked me that question, and he said, "Oh, you're with Internal Revenue." (laughter) And I said, "No, not quite."

LG: My philosophy still remains the same; otherwise you're saying that the worker has to reconcile himself forever to exactly his status in life. In other words, he is a junior partner of the economy and that's his role; there are many labor movements which think just that way, in this country and abroad.

That was one of the things that bothered me about the union people I bumped into in England. I finally figured out that they are too docile; the one thing about the American labor movement that is so distinctive and so beautiful is that it has a certain element of rambunctiousness.

It has a tendency, once in a while, to kick the slats out of the playpen. I used that remark once up in Montreal. The Teamsters have a tendency to invite some of the employer representatives to some of their big conclaves. Whether this is part of their general policy of getting along with the employers or figuring that it's a good thing for the officials to hear all sides of the story, they do it.

Some chap had spoken in Montreal, representing the trucking interests of Quebec; he had a long peroration about the Teamsters overreaching themselves, asking for too much. I was called upon to speak the next day and I said, "Before I make a few remarks about what's been happening in Warehouse, I just want to say something about what this chap has to say yesterday.

"All he's saying there is that he's a bit irritated with you fellows for kicking a couple of slats out of the playpen. He thinks he has it built just right for you and that's the way it's going to be and even if the union has grown up a bit, that playpen is not going to get any bigger."

There was a Catholic, a Monsignor from Temple University, yes, and he and I got into quite a discussion before the delegates; he was addressing himself to the same point. I just decided I would take off and give him my own philosophy about the American working class and what I thought about it; it had certain anarchistic trends to it. It also had things that were very distinctive and never to be sold short - a willingness to fight and to take on long battles.

LG: Quinn was his name! That's it, Francis Quinn. Well, later that year I got an invitation from him to come back and speak at his commencement exercises! (laughter)

Ward: Well, apparently, you and he didn't disagree too much?

LG: No, not too much; he knew at that time . . . .

Ward: Did you go? Did you accept?

LG: I didn't go, no. Next time I saw him, I said, "That was a very flattering invitation and I appreciate it; I sent you a letter and told you as much." The substitute he got for me was the Secretary of Labor.

Quinn was one of those in the Catholic Church who supported the Farm Workers; he knew I did. As a matter of fact, even though here I was working very closely with the Teamsters, I was an outspoken supporter of Cesar Chavez and the Farm Workers.

It doesn't mean that you take on every beef and every cause blindly or stupidly; and it doesn't mean that you never back up. Sometimes you have to retreat; I told you the story about taking a wage cut at a Hawaii plantation. Phil Murray used that as an occasion to tee off on Harry.

But on the other hand not to reconcile yourself to just the same slice of the pie. I think once a union has done that, it's bound to lose some of its real makings.

Ward: Well, I think you would say that St. Sure was a shrewd, effective employer's representative.

LG: And St. Sure never made any bones about the fact that he represented the employers. He never sat across the table and said, "Look, I'm doing this for your good"; none of that jazz; none of this business you get out of some employers, "Well, I'm an old time progressive." They're the worst ones to deal with; impossible! St. Sure was an employer's representative and a damn effective one.

Ward: Well, I'm thinking back to the comparison he made in 1957 of the difference between Goldblatt and Bridges. He said the employers as a rule would rather deal with Bridges - found him easier to get along with. I presume you felt at all times that St. Sure was getting the most he could for the people he represented and you on the other hand were getting the most you could for the people you represented?

LG: That's right - that was my job.

Ward: So obviously that would bring ideological and fundamental clashes here and there between you and St. Sure, wouldn't it?

LG: Yes; on one occasion I remember mentioning to St. Sure, "Look, I don't want to kid you or anybody else. I know there's so much money in the pot and I know what we don't get, you take; and that's how simple it is." George Valter used to be much more outspoken; he had this heavy Russian accent, and he'd get angry in negotiations and turn to the employers and say, "You got it, ve need it and ve gonna get it!"

Fantastic Economic Power

LG: It also means that you have to reconcile yourself to some things that are not all that easy, and some of them get to be rough decisions. For example, from 1958 to 1960 on, when we began to drive harder and harder in Warehouse to lift the wage scales and to get some very basic and big improvements in the contract, I was aware that once you negotiated a contract, you had to figure on a certain number of casualties, because it was different than shipping.

The shipping industry has a feature that should never be underestimated - the economic power of the longshoremen is fantastic compared to most workers; the amount of economic leverage they have. How does a shipping company run away from you? If they don't like the conditions in San Francisco, they'll build a port in Salinas? Take those ships over the mountains somehow? In other words, it's a captive industry.

LG: How is cargo going to move if it doesn't move by ship? I'm not talking about a handful of flowers from Hawaii or a couple of small automobile parts that have to be shipped from Detroit; of course, those will be air freighted. I'm talking about the big movements of cargo, everything from grocery supplies to lumber and and sugar.

The amount of economic power you have in longshore is fantastic; it's an industry, for example, where fundamentally you cannot store inventory. Let us say the steel industry plans on a shut-down or they are going to take on a beef. They can get orders ahead, they can work a lot of overtime, they can fill those orders.

In shipping they can do that only to a very limited extent. They can divert cargo in a few cases, but basically they can't do the same thing that other employers can do - storing up inventory, and figuring well, instead of having a shut-down in September this year, they'll have one when the contract comes up. So, it's a different thing, and consequently, the relationship of bargaining is different.

In places like Warehouse you might figure that in a small warehouse either the employers pay the going rate or it's too bad. If you start negotiating every contract predicated on ability to pay, then you are going to get down to a point of diminishing returns.

It's not true, for example, that we can get everybody in Warehouse around here up to the master contract rate. We have been organizing a number of industries that have been unorganized for years; the rates of pay are extremely low - three bucks an hour. The chance of pulling those people up to the contract rate of pay overnight is impossible. We're aware of that.

Some people call them sub-standard houses. They aren't sub-standard. Many of them are borderline industries, some of them fly-by-night, some of them the unorganized type. All need organizing very badly. They form a large reservoir of unorganized workers; that takes a lot of hard work. When you do organize them, if you can get them a basic increase in pay, fairly substantial, and a few things such as seniority

LG: rights, vacations, holidays with pay, and particularly health and welfare, the workers themselves say okay, they'll settle for that, for the time being.

You can't go back and tell them, we're going to pull you out on strike for the full master contract; they themselves wouldn't believe you, and they wouldn't be prepared to take on that kind of a fight. So you have to do these things. That does not get me away from what I still think is the basic concept about that pie.

Ward: Yes, well, as I said, a man like St. Sure and a man like Lou Goldblatt are bound to meet and there are bound to be clashes. Apparently, this was true of Harry at one time, but not later. As you said, he was very amenable to any suggestion St. Sure had to make.

LG: Well, that is a hard one to measure. I'm not making any secret that I disagreed with Harry on a number of things, and later on some of the disagreements got to be pretty sharp. But unless you see the thing in its proper perspective, frankly, I don't think you do Harry justice; and I'm not here as an apologist or anything.

Look at the foundation of the Longshoremen's union, broken in the '20s and started again in the '30's; the '34 strike; then a running fight that went on endlessly to 1948; and combine with that all the other things that impinged at the same time, the continued trials of Harry Bridges, the falling out with the CIO, the Cold War and the redbaiting, the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists and the raiding.

Finally, the employers make a decision to enter into a new era - call it an era of semi-class collaboration; they're going to try to make it look attractive. Well, what sort of reactions do you expect from someone like Harry, then, who has been battling for all these years?

Finally, the employer says, "Okay, the fight's over. If there's any justice in a grievance, it's yours. We're not going to see how difficult we can make life for you. We're not going to take the attitude of a man like Gregory Harrison."

LG: I think I told you of the incident in the 1948 negotiations. The item on the table was when the man who has earned a vacation happens to die, does his widow get his vacation pay? Gregory Harrison's reaction was, "What for? He's on permanent vacation." Then you get a situation quite the contrary where the employers are in a position to come in, in effect, with clean hands.

Pretty soon the Coast Committee finds the employers are amenable to straightening out most beefs. But then the committee decided the men are wrong in some cases; that's a question of values, and even more important, procedure.

I start off - at least I did all my life - with the assumption that the workers are right. Not to say that they are right all the time, but I'm not going to start off by saying they are wrong. If I then find out they are wrong, it's my job to go confront them and say, "Look, you screwed this one up, but good; lay off. You have to straighten out on this."

I don't believe in a policy of just continued job actions and what have you. I think that is self-defeating. At a certain point you lose your own people on that program. Also, it becomes too handy a manoeuvre for all kinds of individuals, completely self-serving. You could tell when somebody was about to run for office; all of a sudden grievances piled up, there was screaming and yelling going on, special stop-work meetings.

Some locals start to play games - like some of them holding back on ratification of the contract until they see the contract is going to be ratified - then they vote "No." Why would they vote 'No'? Because the guys who advocated voting 'No' would have a campaign issue when they ran for office; they were against the contract all the time.

So, those are things that happened. Maybe some of it was an inevitable by-product of a democratic union. There is no question that a democratic union at certain points is going to border on anarchy; but do you stop it at any cost? That's the point! Once the guys figure that members of the Coast Committee

LG: are wrong before the workers have had a chance to make their case - that doesn't have to happen more than a couple of times . . . .

Ward: They figure the Coast Committee is wrong?

LG: Look, I'm paying you, fellow; yep.

Men's Opinions Of Each Other

Ward: Ah, yes. We have reached the end of that particular question, the influence of St. Sure on the union, haven't we?

LG: I think so, there are dozens of specific examples on it, but I think we have covered it. I really don't know how much more can be gained. I think the job is really somebody else's, who has done an interview with St. Sure, to figure those things out.

Ward: Well, I've read the interview with St. Sure.

LG: I never have; I didn't even know there was one around.

Ward: Incidentally, it might interest you to know the ILWU librarian showed it to me.

LG: Who was that?

Ward: Carol Schwartz, and I read it. Very interesting and, I think, quite important. I noticed the date and the name of the interviewer, a woman named Corinne Gilb. This woman interviewed him for the U.C. Department of Industrial Relations in '57. I asked Carol, "Where did it come from? How did you get it?" And she said, "Well, when we cleaned out Harry's office, this was one of the things that came into the library."

LG: That's news to me; I wasn't even aware of such an interview.

Ward: St. Sure had quite a bit to say about things I have already told you; he went into considerable discussion about the differences between Bridges and Goldblatt. This was in '57. He redbaited you a little; he said, "His opinions, his motives may be communist, maybe not, I don't know." That's the way he put it.

LG: Well, I never made it any secret of being a left-winger.

Ward: I know; it was his way of giving you a little red paint. He didn't say you were a bad man. He told the story of questioning you one day about your motivations. He said, "Well, when the revolution comes, I'll bet you'll find me on the workers' committee." And he quoted you as saying, "I don't think you'll make the workers' committee - I think they will have shot you by that time." Yes, that interview was a little gold mine.

(Interview 31: 26 October, 1978)

Ward: All right, Lou, you have some further comments on St. Sure?

LG: Yes; you mentioned some statements he made. I went back and read that transcript you were referring to. Obviously, he was in error when he used the number either 25 years or 35 years he said he's known me. The tape was done in 1957; if the number of years he was using was 25 years that brings us back to 1932. I didn't know St. Sure in '32. I was still at the University of California at Berkeley. I was not at that time a member of the ILWU.

And I frankly don't recall that conversation he alludes to. I'm not saying it could not have taken place; he does mention the fact that we met in conjunction with a big warehouse strike we had over in Alameda. I do recall that strike - that was a consolidated warehouse operated by Cal Pack or a number of the canners.

It was a major shipping depot which we had organized. The company in that case signed a backdoor agreement with Vandeleur of the State Federation of Labor. I do recall a major confrontation there, where the whole Alameda police force was called out.

Ward: Is that the one where the guys with the shotguns were shaking?

LG: That's right - yes; and that's where Ralph Dawson had a complete map worked out how we were going to re-man those picket lines, but . . . . There were a number of guys hurt in that beef and the thing was broken up pretty badly.

Ward: Well, St. Sure was definitely the villain in that case, wasn't he?

LG: I'm sure that he was connected with the employers. We did not win that strike. We didn't have the power.

Ward: Was this before or after your tangle with St. Sure on the Santa Cruz Packing thing?

LG: The Santa Cruz Packing thing had taken place earlier; that case went to the U. S. Supreme Court. They ordered a whole group of men reinstated with a lot of back pay. But I don't recall any specific conversations with him in regard to Santa Cruz Packing. There might have been some concerning this consolidated warehouse in Alameda.

Ward: But didn't you tell me that when he came back into the ILWU picture as president of the PMA, he called you aside and said that he hoped you wouldn't have any hard feelings because of the early row with Santa Cruz Packing?

LG: Yes; and perhaps he was referring also to the one at Cal Pack.

Ward: But apparently he thought he had met you at Santa Cruz Packing?

LG: Or in conjunction with it later on, perhaps. It could be. Oh, there's no question that he was in the scene there.

Ward: And he was much more militant on the side of the employers then than he became later?

LG: There's no question about his program in terms of pulling the employers together and making a decision that they were going to make book with the State Federation of Labor. Later on, I think the whole thing was turned over to the Teamsters; no question of his attitude there.

LG: As to his particular reference to me and his brag that in case of a revolution he might be serving on some workers' committee, I may have said that he'd be hung before then, or shot, and that I said it without a smile - it could very well have taken place.

I don't consider it terribly important anyway. It only had some importance later on, in 1961 or '62, during that time when they made the agreement that would have shifted the terminal workers over to Longshore. That was the time that I entered the picture very aggressively on behalf of the terminal workers, who were a very strong and loyal group; a lot of them came from the west side of Oakland, now almost an entirely black ghetto.

And it was during those negotiations that Harry made some remark which rang very peculiarly in my mind - something like "Don't try to pull any fast ones," or not to take advantage of St. Sure. My reaction was to shake my head . . . .

Ward: The indication was that you were trying to take advantage of St. Sure?

LG: Something like that; only when I read the transcript now do I get what must have happened. Somewhere along the line St. Sure must have mentioned some confrontation with me.

Harry would figure, I guess in his own way, that I was trying to even up scores or something. Which, frankly, was not true; plus the fact that the reason I shook my head was because I was just puzzled. I didn't know how anybody could take advantage of St. Sure. This man was a seasoned, tough negotiator who knew exactly what the employers' interests were and where he was going all the time.

Ward: Well, I've heard - and this seems to be apropos - I've heard that at one stage of the game, Harry said that during Santa Cruz or this East Bay Terminal beef you had threatened St. Sure's life.

LG: Right. Now that I see the transcript, there's only one place he could have gotten it from -

Ward: St. Sure?

LG: Obviously; couldn't suck it out of his thumb! So, I'd say that St. Sure was a charming, competent scoundrel. I guess I mean it that way - maybe not in the ordinary dictionary sense of the word. I'm not saying he was guilty of any peculations . . .

Ward: But to blow up a normal incident into a threat is not being very truthful, I'd say.

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LG: Yes, and to finish up on his being a charming scoundrel, there's no question that he was a maverick. Perhaps some of our thinking or Harry's thinking rubbed off on him. Those were changing times; St. Sure's general attitude towards unions was quite different from the open shop employers.

His feeling that straight open shop campaigns were fruitless and self-defeating, I think is a very accurate appraisal. I think he had learned a great deal from what had happened in that era from 1934 to 1948.

Ward: I nearly fell over in 1944 or early 1945 when I walked into the California Labor School to find Paul St. Sure conducting seminars on labor relations. Something had happened to the man in between.

LG: It wouldn't surprise me. On that score I think he was a good deal his own man. One of the things in later years, not too long before he died, that did him a lot of injury was when the California Processors and Growers decided to make a change, either because they felt they wanted to adopt a different line or that St. Sure was devoting too much of his time to the PMA.

Ward: He indicated himself that he was pretty well absorbed in the PMA.

LG: It could be, but they made a shift and let St. Sure go. I think he considered that to be quite a personal blow.

Another example of what a maverick he was: do you recall the incident in 1959 where Kruschchev came to the west coast? You remember the greeting he got in Los Angeles where the mayor was very hostile?

Ward: Where they wouldn't let him see Disneyland.

LG: Well, he never got over that one. We in San Francisco decided that we ought to do everything possible to see that his visit here was in complete contrast to L. A. George Christopher was mayor.

Ward: Yes, and George went down to the airport and met him.

LG: Right. The hospitality here was entirely different than Los Angeles. There was a warm reception here, with a big turnout at the Palace Hotel when he spoke. We invited him to the Longshore hall. Of course, all of us were quite excited about the prospect of his coming; the word we had gotten was that he would try to make it.

I happened to be down at the Longshore hall talking to some of the guys in the event he did get there. We figured it would be around the noon hour, and if so to try to get the guys when they knocked off work to drop around and have a chance to meet him.

Somebody suddenly rushed into the hall and said, "Look, Mr. Kruschchev is outside in a car!" and I walked out and met him and his wife. They had driven by the hall to take a look at it and apparently he had already made up his mind to come by there.

Well, St. Sure was one of those who joined with Harry to invite Kruschchev in to visit the Longshore hall. Kruschchev did come in. The man with Kruschchev from the State Department was Lodge -

Ward: Henry Cabot Lodge? The State Department was lousy with Lodges . . . .

LG: Or from the same family. I remember when Kruschchev came in the hall Lodge seemed to be quite concerned and I said, "There's nothing to worry about."

Kruschchev walked into the hall, and one of the longshoremen handed Kruschchev his white cap which the Russian promptly put on. He then said a few words to about 500 guys from up and down the front gathered there to welcome him. It was a warm reception; nothing untoward, no hostile remarks - quite the contrary. I know he was quite impressed.

LG: The State Department man and the police who were assigned to protect Kruschchev remained as inconspicuous as possible; no attempt was made to keep people in some segregated sections. It was like the usual thing at the Longshore hall. St. Sure would see this as something that, if he felt like doing it, he'd do it.

Ward: We were somewhere in Europe and we read all about this, probably in the International Herald Tribune, including the incident of the white cap; and also the incident which showed Nikita Kruschchev being shown through Pacific Heights with its mansions and so forth. He turned to Christopher and asked very cynically, "These are workers' homes? I'd like to see a worker's home."

Christopher said, "Maybe." Kruschchev turned to the policeman who was driving him and said, "I'd like to see your home." Right then. And there was time, so the guy said, "Do you mean it?" "Sure." "Well, just give me ten minutes to phone my wife!" And by God that's what happened - they went to the police sergeant's home, saw the kids and his wife.

LG: That sounds very much like Kruschchev's visit here. By and large, I'd say that San Francisco made an excellent impression. When you look at the fact that this was the city where the UN (United Nations) had its initial session, it's a very colorful chapter. I never had a feeling that St. Sure had the Red horrors.

Ward: No, I don't think so. You read his quote in the transcript about possible Communism in your background, but he didn't say it in an unpleasant way -

LG: Oh no; this wasn't in the tone of the times that it was part of a grand conspiracy to destroy America or anything of the sort. Now, on the other hand, I don't think he ever lost sight of what the employers wanted.

Ward: And he got a good deal of what they wanted.

LG: I think so. Frankly I think so.

XXIV CLASHING PERSONALITIES

Changes In The Union Membership

Ward: All right, let's change now if you like to the situation that during all the years of the employer-government attacks upon Harry, he was pretty damn busy. Those hearings and trials took his time and energy and in the meantime other people would tend the store, primarily you, because you were the second in command of the ILWU.

When the BRS case was finally won and Harry had time to relax and look around, there had been a big change. What had originally been a union that was 90 or 95 per cent longshore and the rest warehouse, had become an international union in which longshore was in the minority of the membership. The newer membership with which Harry did not have close contact was west coast warehouse and particularly Hawaii.

It was the majority of the union; Hawaii itself was damn near half the union - just that one local, amalgamated Local 142. This, I gather, led to certain changes in Harry's approach, particularly to you and those who had had helped you. Can you comment on that?

LG: Oh, there's no question that the union had begun to change. It was changing even prior to the 1949 indictment of Bridges, Robertson and Schmidt, which was a renewal of the onslaught against Harry, a lapse there of some ten or eleven years since the first trial. Meanwhile the warehousemen had been growing very rapidly. We had begun organization of Hawaii on a large scale. Harry was down there during the pineapple beef in '47. He was down there in the '49

LG: longshore strike, particularly where it reached the national level, both in the Congress and with Cyrus Ching, the Federal mediator with the Chinese name. Harry did a good job on it, the kind of a job where he is very adept. I think it was in the meetings with Cyrus Ching where he put forward some ten or eleven proposals on settling the Hawaii thing, all of which in one way or another would have accomplished pretty much what we wanted.

Harry saw the growth in Hawaii; numerically he could see the thing was changing. True, during the war, the longshore division also grew very rapidly. I forget the exact number of longshoremen they were using in San Francisco.

Ward: Didn't you say that at one time it had reached a peak of about 8,000 -

LG: Or more, yes, because of the enormous movement of cargo out of here. Bear in mind that during that time all cargoes were being handled in the old conventional fashion so that they required a very large work force. A great many men were added to the work force, and the longshore division played a very strategic role.

But in terms of the changing composition of the union, Harry was thoroughly aware of it. I think that Harry's reaction to it was that once some of these things were out of his hair, he would become very, very active where he had not been in prior years, particularly in Hawaii. He began to make more and more frequent trips and participated in some of the developments in the Hawaii scene, some of which worked out and some of which were not the happiest things in the world because relations between him and Jack Hall were not the best.

Ward: Harry and Jack did not get along?

LG: Right - but that was not in '49; I don't recall it becoming that much of an issue in '49. I thought that during the '49 strike, the role of the west coast longshoremen was absolutely essential. Had they not dropped the anchor, I think the chances of winning that strike would not have been good.

LG: But later on between Jack and Harry . . . . Harry made some references where he said maybe Jack was in his cups - could be, Jack liked to drink - and that he and Harry got into some hard words. This was sometime in the 1950s, I believe.

In the initial stages of the 1958 sugar strike in Hawaii I recall Harry being there. Jack started off handling those negotiations entirely on his own. I was sort of drifting out of the picture, or trying, to a good degree.

In many ways, the guys in Hawaii had never really become genuinely autonomous and able to handle their own affairs. There was always "Big Daddy" coming along. You can't keep holding their hands forever.

I recall some lengthy sessions down there, partly by the prodding of Harry; he kept saying, "Jesus Christ, these guys have got to begin to start handling some of these things themselves." And I was inclined to agree.

We had some sessions with the leadership down there; we said, "Let's try to break up some of this responsibility. Maybe you have to have back-up teams by the International in some of the major negotiations like sugar; there will have to be some direct help from Longshore. On the other hand, you have dozens and dozens of other smaller contracts. Let the guys get going on these things. Handle them on the local level, on the specific island. Let the regional director step in there. Let the regional office act as a sort of a backup, if a guy gets stuck, even before you call the International."

To some degree, this worked out. There was the beginning of a transformation. Today you have local business agents who handle all negotiations; you have divisional directors down there who handle contracts. True, on some of the major contracts, the International continued to play a major role, but that's to be expected; that's the role of the International, longshore on the west coast, sugar in Hawaii. The geographical location doesn't make any difference.

The 1958 Sugar Strike

LG: In '58 I was getting deeper and deeper into warehouse again. But in '58 there developed a very lengthy sugar strike, I think 128 days. For some reason Harry thought that Jack was running the guys around the track exercising them; or maybe he was trying to assert his own leadership.

During the initial days there were sharp exchanges because Harry was absolutely convinced that there was an agreement around. Jack, I thought, was quite patient about the whole thing. Some genuine efforts had been made to try to deal with the employers, and Jack kept pressing guys like Boyd MacNaughton (president of C. Brewer) to make an offer. He and his friends had been going around talking their heads off to groups like the Chamber of Commerce, announcing that a strike was inevitable.

It was all part of their publicity facade, trying to hide the employer position. Their idea was you go through the motions; you make what you consider to be your proposal; then you just sit until the union cracks. Well, that wasn't about to happen. The employers put something like a four cent offer on the table and they just wouldn't budge . . . .

Ward: What were the sugar workers asking?

LG: Twenty five cents! It didn't necessarily have to be in one year, but as a matter of fact that's the way it later worked out. We got what we wanted, spread out over a couple of years. I didn't like the feel of the thing. I didn't like the feel of Harry that somehow Jack, or Jack with my assistance, was running the guys around the track just to exercise them.

Ward: You didn't feel that the strike was unnecessary?

LG: If the employers refused to budge, I felt that the strike was inevitable. After a good deal of struggle on the goddam thing, we finally set up a meeting with the principals. I told you that the Hawaii employers maintained this fiction that the principals would never meet with you.

LG: Sure, you might see somebody from Castle & Cooke, but you wouldn't see Alec Budge; or you might see somebody there from C. Brewer, but you wouldn't see MacNaughton; or you might see someone from American Factors, but you wouldn't see H. C. Eichelberger; or Sandy Walker, or whatever his name was, the head of American Factors. Eichelberger, I think, came later.

But, we finally did get a chance to meet with the principals. It was downtown somewhere, at the offices of one of the Big Five. Jack was there, Harry was there, I was there. There was a painstaking explanation to the Big Five that we were not there looking for a strike and that this propaganda flack - which after a while could become a self-fulfilling prophecy on the part of the employers - just wasn't true.

We got nowhere - they had made up their minds. This was a lengthy strike, over 120 days. We got a lot of support from the mainland, the longshore locals in many cases voting $5 or $10 assessments. They came through very big, and so did warehouse. The strike was finally won. But again, the suspicion, and Jack's obviously impatient reaction, even though he tried to keep his cool - and I think he did.

We went through all these efforts to try to clear the air, so that the union would be united. What could be worse, going into a strike of those proportions against a powerful foe like the Big Five and the sugar industry and to have the union divided within itself? Particularly where one of the top officers was not in agreement that the strike was warranted; that's the kind of strike you lose. So, in retrospect, I think the efforts were worthwhile.

The fact that these things leave scars is unfortunate. I don't know what the hell you can do about it. The only guys who seem to manage these situations are professional fighters. I'll never forget the remark made by Archie Moore, remember him?

Ward: Yes.

LG: A grand old man; he finally got a crack at the heavyweight title years after he was over the hill. For years he couldn't get a fight at all, unless he

LG: was willing to throw it, and he wouldn't. I recall Archie Moore fighting a Frenchman and watching the fight on TV; a French-Canadian who was as tough as a mule; Archie Moore must have been knocked down five or six times in the course of this fight.

For a while you'd think this fight was over with - but no, it wasn't; Moore won the fight by a knockout. He was interviewed at the end of the fight and to my amazement he said, "Well, I hope everybody enjoyed the fight as much as I did. It was a hell of a good battle." (laughter)

Ward: That wasn't the way with Harry and Jack?

LG: No. But people can't all be built that way, can they? And this was not Jack's reaction to it, I'm sure. It's too bad. I was deeply involved in the situation itself, but I was partially outside of the personal situation. While some of these things affected me directly, I obviously had quite a different reaction.

Ward: Well, when you are talking about what happened 30 years ago, that's something else.

LG: Right. Or when you are talking about a situation twenty years ago, and you look back at it historically and see that it was worthwhile doing.

There was nothing wrong with Harry saying, "Do we really have to take a beef here; have we explored everything?" I see nothing wrong with that. But if you are personally involved you might say, "Well, that isn't the real reason you're raising this question. The real reason is to cast aspersions as to my ability or honesty."

Ward: And you wonder if it is the real reason?

LG: Yes, because you're so deeply involved individually, you have so much at stake: your own credibility, your own role in terms of leadership; whether it's being abused, whether it's being handled stupidly, your own competency and devotion. It's different; you can't see it the same way as Archie Moore did at the end of that fight.

LG: So, all I can say is that when I look back at 20 years ago, it was worthwhile doing these things. There's nothing wrong with an international official coming along and offering a warning. Striking is the easiest part, in many cases; winning a strike is quite a different thing.

You're never sure of winning when you strike, no matter how right you are or how strong you are and even if you have covered all the bases. It's a lesson many of us learned very early. It's hard for people to believe these days.

During one set of office workers negotiations, with our own office staff, here they were with a string of demands longer than your arm. And I said, "You don't have that kind of bargaining power, and you simply assume that every time a union asks for things that they win them." I said, "And we lose strikes too. I just came away from Sacramento - we just lost our ass in a strike, where Frank Thompson thought he could win one up there."

Well, there's some guy from the Teamsters I bumped into and he told me, "You know, this is tough country up here - I'm not sure you can lick that guy." Some big guy by the name of Gerry Stiefvater who ran this big plant that processed nuts, by the name of Continental Nut Company. Frank Thompson figured he could win a strike there; well, we lost it.

I go back and say that the fact that these questions are raised doesn't necessarily imply that there is all this motivation that has nothing to do with the strike itself; in other words, asking why Harry would raise these questions. The fact that you cover these bases, including meeting with the principals - a very unusual thing - was worthwhile; it's just one of the things that had to be done, that's all. It should be done, or attempted. It's not the way Jack reacted; no two ways about that.

Ward: Wasn't there a rumor around that Jack was making noises like running for the presidency of the ILWU against Harry?

LG: I don't know; you hear all kinds of rumbles.

Ward: At least you don't think there was much to it.

LG: No; I don't think Jack ever made statements with that intent.

Ward: You knew Jack quite well?

LG: Yes, we were very close friends from when I first went down there.

Ward: You got along well together?

LG: Yes, -

Ward: Even if you disagreed, you disagreed in a friendly way?

LG: Oh, yes; we had our disagreements and we could be up half the night arguing about these things, but the working relationship was good. It stayed good until the day he died.

Ward: I suppose there were occasions when this difficulty between Harry and Jack inevitably caused you to take one side or the other?

LG: Not particularly; I thought in 1958 that Jack had done a competent job. Perhaps I had been in closer touch with the situation than Harry had been. The employers had taken this position and launched that kind of a campaign.

When I saw all the clippings with the speeches being made by people like Budge and MacNaughton, I knew how to interpret them. I knew enough about the Hawaii scene by that time so that I did not feel that Jack was walking in blind; nor did I think he was trying to run the guys around the track. Neither one of those statements was correct.

I thought Jack was competent and patient. After the '58 strike, I'd say that the employers in their relationship to Jack Hall were a heck of a lot more constructive; at least they laid off going out on these anti-union crusades, or this business of just laying down their position and seeing if they could make it stick.

There was a good deal more give and take in collective bargaining, and there was a good deal more acceptance of Jack. I'm trying to recall when the Circuit Court of Appeals threw out Jack's case.

Ward: I think it was '58, wasn't it?

LG: I think, yes, it was January, '58 when they threw out his case. The sugar strike was shortly after that.

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The sugar negotiations were going on prior to that. They had started in late 1957 with the contract running out, I think, in February or March. The strike took place later on in the year.

I don't know whether the employer position had jelled before the appellate court ruled, or whether the decision had come along and the employers decided that Jack was out to show that now he could even up all scores. The strike finally wound up with two wage steps to make 23 cents, plus classifications and a uniform 40-hour week for the whole industry. It was the only agricultural field in the country that was on a 40-hour week.

Ward: It was a very nice gain.

LG: Yes - very good gains. In other words, all the exempt weeks were eliminated; up to that time we had exempt weeks on some of the plantations; weeks where the employers could work 48 hours without any payment of overtime.

Ward: Did this change or amend Harry's original skepticism about the strike?

LG: It did not in any way alter unmitigated support by the rest of the union. The Longshore division alone, I know, brought in an awful lot of money to help the strike; much of it came out of a whole series of Longshore caucuses in that period, and this could not have been accomplished without Harry's support.

Ward: So he supported the strike?

LG: Oh yes, he supported the strike; his skepticism might not have had the implications that Jack attributed to them. We're back to that same point again, that the skepticism might have been simply one of the techniques used to exhaust every avenue for a constructive solution without a strike.

Whispers vs. Facts

Ward: I got the impression that fundamentally Jack Hall felt that Hawaii was his apple.

LG: Yes - no question, he felt that way. Bear in mind that Jack had been very active in attempts to organize Hawaii before the ILWU made its push. Jack was in the '34 strike.

Ward: Even though there was a story that he had scabbed in the '34 strike.

LG: That's another thing which is really awfully sad; a pure invention, terribly unkind and completely uncalled for. No reason for it at all.

Ward: Except that Harry maybe was just striking back at . .?

LG: No, this was quite a bit later on, much later on.

Ward: Well, the situation didn't improve?

LG: No, it was in the late sixties.

Ward: That was at the convention of . . . .?

LG: No; Harry never made the statement in the convention. I don't think he ever made the statement in writing, or made it publicly.

Ward: It was whispers?

LG: Whispers, yes, and naturally unwarranted. I chased it down; I even called Morris Weisberger on it - he was the head of the SUP then. "That story got back to me too," he said, "Absolutely untrue. Jack Hall has complete clearance on the strike, did picket duty, the whole shebang. The only thing that is true is that Lundeberg made Jack a member of the 99 year club."

When Lundeberg didn't really like somebody - this was after '34 - he would expel him for 99 years. They had a group of guys who called themselves

LG: the 99 year club. "That was uncalled for and I finally straightened that one out." In fact, there was a nasty scene one time up in Canada. Eddie De Mello was a member of the ILWU Executive Board at the time and he had been a very good friend of Jack's. Eddie was from Hawaii, the Big Island. Eddie's dead now. He was our legislative representative, quite a competent guy. I recall a confrontation in British Columbia.

Unfortunately, much of it was my own mistake. I should know better than to argue with Harry when he starts having a few beers and I'm having a few drinks. Somehow the subject of Jack Hall came up and I made the statement to Harry, "This crap has to be stopped, this business of Jack Hall scabbing in 1934." He said, "Well, maybe he didn't scab - he finked." A very fine definition: a scab is one who takes a guy's job, and a fink is a guy who refuses to come out on strike.

I'm not sure if Jack was still around - I think he was. I'm sure Jack heard these stories before he died, unfortunately. Harry said, "I have the proof." And I said, "Well," - George Martin was sitting there too - "here's George Martin and here's Eddie De Mello, an old friend of Jack's, both sitting here, and if you have the proof, show it." "No," he said, "we'll do it at the right time" - the usual business. "I've got it right here." (Tapping his pocket). And I said, "That's a goddam lie." I had no business saying that.

Ward: What did De Mello do?

LG: He came away from there shocked to the gills. Eddie De Mello was very close to Jack and very loyal. As to whether Jack felt that Hawaii was his <u>kuliana</u> - it's a Hawaiian word.

Ward: What does it mean?

LG: <u>Kuliana</u> is like your province - your jurisdiction. It's also your headache. In other words, it's an area of your concern where you are in charge. There is no question he felt that way; and from the time I first met Jack, which must have been around 1944, the first trip I made down there . . . . I felt the same way.

Ward: You recognized his feelings?

LG: Not only recognized his feelings, but I also felt that if there was any guy who had a grasp of the thing, deserved to have something named his kuliana - not that I believe in private ownership - in terms of his work and his ability and responsibility, he was entitled to it. I didn't feel that he was any carpetbagger.

Ward: You were rather careful not to trespass on his province?

LG: I felt that I shouldn't . . . .

Ward: You were helpful, very helpful?

LG: Yes. That's quite different. I did not feel that he had quite the same contact with the longshoremen that he did with the sugar workers.

Jack met all the qualifications of a really competent union guy, not only the devotion of work, which is essential. He wasn't afraid of work. Jack thought nothing of packing a bag and going out to the islands such as Kauai or Maui, Hawaii - the Big Island - and just spending days going from plantation to plantation, going to the fields, talking to the workers, spending the evenings with them. He had the faculty of keeping an open mind until he got a real reading.

Ward: He was a good listener?

LG: He was a hell of a good listener, and came closer than most people in personal rapport with individuals on the work level; I relied on him very, very heavily in things like the sugar negotiations; on how far we could go and what we could do; his judgment was good.

Secondly, Jack was fantastic with figures. He had an amazing capacity to absorb them, whether it was just reading financial reports or keeping notes and working out the mathemetics and cost elements of a contract. He was extremely good at that.

Jack also knew the industry, the whole interlocking structure and relationship. He knew a great deal about the people of the Islands, not

LG: only the workers; also he had a faculty of picking up and understanding what was going on at the managerial level. Not in all cases, but a good many. He was extremely akamai, as they say - that's another Hawaiian word. In talking about Jack, Hawaiian words fit. A K A M A I is an Hawaiian word meaning "not just having knowledge," - it's a combination of knowledge, understanding and a feel for something.

Ward: I think you put it once that he knew where all the handles were.

LG: And a guy who is really akamai is on top of something - he can actually smell where it's going. When someone is akamai it does not mean that he just has smarts, like we use the expression, "He has a lot of smarts." It doesn't mean that he is merely learned on a subject; akamai, he has something more than that - very much a feel for it.

I thought that if Jack felt this was his kuliana, he was correct. This was reflected in the way I worked with him; it didn't mean I never disagreed with him - you would know better than that; I'm just not a hinge-head. It doesn't mean to say we didn't argue, sometimes quite loudly; we hashed out a lot of things. Some times it took days, but this never interfered basically with a very solid working relationship.

From the very beginning in Hawaii, although I played a very active role, any time it came to issuing a statement, very rarely would I make a mistake by talking about what was going on there; only when a reporter would catch me coming off the plane, or something like that. In the main I saw to it that any statements on the union's position would go out on behalf of Jack and the officers of Local 142; that's the way it should be.

So that the locals down there would not feel - at least that was my position, and it still remains the same - that the International comes in and preempts their authority. The membership should not feel that way. After all, the local people are the ones who have to live with the situation when you leave. If they're going to take responsibility for an agreement, let them take it.

LG: You don't make the agreement and then walk away and say, "Okay fellow, you live with it." I don't believe in that; take some of the bounces as you can, but bear in mind that it's still the local people who wind up with the day to day work, who have to keep the confidence of the membership. This, I think, was reflected in my relationship with Jack.

Ward: It must have exacerbated whatever other difficulties you had with Harry, as time went on.

LG: He didn't like it particularly, I can tell you that; he once made a funny crack that somebody ought to talk to Yoshiko - "Oh, what the hell, Lou goes down there and spends half the time at your house." Yoshiko's reaction was, "Well, at least we get to see him that way, and Jack does too."

As a matter of fact, Yoshiko felt it was a terribly important and worthwhile relationship. I recall she was talking to me and she said, "In some respects, it's very good when you come down here. Jack has a tendency to become very involuted."

She used the word in a very interesting way; Jack had these long spells of introspection, and after some of the battles were done, including the '58 sugar strike, he might have gotten more so. I think it was easier for Jack when the battles were on, the organization, all the contract negotiations, and the constant struggle.

I'm not saying he enjoyed these attacks, any more than you'd enjoy having an ulcer - that would be a very peculiar form of enjoyment - but there's a difference between those days of turmoil and what happens when that particular period is over with. Jack struggled mightily to branch out into additional fields, to have the union become deeply involved in political action -- something that always fascinated Jack.

He knew the political scene very well. And of course, he had a long personal relationship with Jack Burns. He began an effort to get some low cost housing. He spent a good deal of time on it, which unfortunately never came to fruition. Also, he was interested in some plantation housing over on the Big Island.

LG: He felt a need for the union to move beyond the immediate realm of the contract. That might be what Yoshiko was referring to.

Ward: What prompted the removal of Jack? The Halls moved to San Francisco some years ago before he died; health, or what?

LG: No. He decided to run, after Chili died, for vice-president. Bob Robertson was retiring; that was 1969. And it had nothing to do with his health, although Jack had had a siege of illness.

Ward: Diabetes, eye trouble . . . ?

LG: Well, the eye trouble must have been congenital, I think, because he always wore heavy lenses. This did not interfere with his reading; Jack read prolifically. Whether he could have driven or not, I don't know. He didn't drive, but he could have driven a hell of a lot better than most of the people you saw on the road.

Ward: Well, if he came here and thought of running for vice-president, that must have disturbed Harry, because the emnity was very sharp by that time?

LG: He didn't like it . . . .

Ward: Did he fight it openly?

LG: No - that's a chapter we'll have to go into. It has to do both with Chili dying and the ambition of Bill Chester (then a regional director) to become a vice-president; Harry's support for Bill Chester; Jack's decision to run. I don't think that Harry would have cared for a confrontation between Chester and Chili . . . .

Ward: But between Chester and Jack?

LG: He might have, yes. I take the responsibility for deciding that a conflict between Jack and Chester was not a good thing for the union. We would be better off to have two vice-presidents.

Jack and Chester ran too. Two vice-presidents instead of one. We'd had two vice-presidents before, then we went back to one. I decided that

LG: rather than have a contest, it would be better to have two.

Ward: You worked it out that way?

LG: Although, Jack's attitude was, if Chester wants to run, fine. Jack's attitude was like that of any candidate - when you go, you go.

XXV COOPERATION WITH THE TEAMSTERS
(Interview 32: 31 October, 1978)

Formation Of The ILWU-Teamster Joint Council

Ward: Lou, you were going to get some dates on the development of the Teamsters ILWU Joint Council.

LG: Yes, in 1957 we were going into Warehouse negotiations. The Teamsters were pretty well locked into arbitration and the understanding I had with Joe Dillon was that they would at least spin their wheels until we had a chance to give our negotiations a whirl. Local 6 warehousemen had the right to strike.

We came out okay; the Warehouse agreement ran for three years, until 1961, the first two years covered by a fixed increase, which was a good deal more than we thought we could have gotten in arbitration. The Teamsters were quite happy with the result.

Then it was in 1960 when we put on a major push in conjunction with the Teamsters, including a joint program to strike if necessary; we managed to get the most substantial wage increase that we had had for many, many years -- 21 cents across the board, which in those days was quite a hunk of dough.

Out of that grew the formal machinery which later matured into the Northern California Warehouse Council, ILWU-IBT (International Brotherhood of Teamsters). Joe Dillon was the co-chairman,

LG: and later on it became George Mock, a vice-president of the Teamsters. I believe he is now first vice-president. Our working relationship was good, the important thing. And there began to emerge some other developments in the labor scene, previously mentioned, not to be taken too lightly.

If there were things going on within the trade union movement which were not in keeping with certain sound principles of trade unionism, or were somewhat off-color, the way to handle these things was not through expulsions and suddenly the labor movement trying to adopt this mantle of super-respectability; these are problems within the family of labor to be argued out and fought out within the family of labor.

Sure, to say the unions are 100 percent clean is misleading; but on the other hand, they sure as heck don't have the degree of peculation that goes on among bankers. As a matter of fact, there was an interesting statement, I think by John L. Lewis before one of the committees where he pointed out that there were a heck of a lot more bankers in jail than there were labor leaders accused of racketeering.

The laws were on the books and if anybody was guilty, it didn't require special laws; nevertheless the AFL went through this business of conducting its own respectability clean-up, and the ILA was one of its first targets. It started off with the ILA and it was not too long thereafter where the union headed by Dave Beck was under the gun of the AFofL; eventually the Teamsters were expelled.

Old JohnEnglish, who was the secretary of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, a big lanky Irishman and a fairly tough trade unionist in his own way, made speeches to the effect that they never were going to go back to the AFofL, not after the way they were treated. They had been loyal members; they paid their per capita on time; they observed the rules and the regulations.

Sure, they might have had some domestic problems but those were their own problems and they would take care of them. They didn't need anybody

LG: sitting in judgment on them. Within a short period of time the ILA had been expelled, the Teamsters had been expelled; there had been some other workers, the Laundry Workers, and so forth.

As soon as we were fighting our way out of the period of harassment of the ILWU, we launched a pretty intensive program around the question of labor unity; we held that nothing was settled by unions fighting unions, by unions being expelled. It wasn't as though we were scrambling to try to get back into the AFL-CIO . . . .

Ward: It was an extension of the idea behind the Maritime Federation, behind the CMU?

LG: Exactly. What was essential was that the unions try to coordinate their efforts, stop the internecine warfare, stop the cannibalism, stop all these stupidities; all they were doing was destroying themselves. The employers, of course, were perfectly happy to sit on the sidelines and say, "Go at it, fellows, you're doing a great job; although we just remembered there are a couple of other people in this other union you haven't gotten yet." They would be glad to sit back and point out targets for you.

Of course, the politicians moved into the scene; the McClellan Committee, with Robert Kennedy as counsel and Senator John Kennedy as one of the members of the committee. That became a political instrument in the campaign for Senator Kennedy; election to the presidency. There's no question what role Bobby Kennedy played; it was the forerunner of the passage of the Kennedy-Landrum-Griffin bill. Senator Kennedy is the one who later on . . . .

Ward: His name doesn't appear on it, though.

LG: That's right; he fought valiantly to have his name taken off, after the fact.

Dealing With Jimmy Hoffa

LG: Well, our support of the Teamsters had nothing to do with what was going on in the internecine affairs of the Teamsters' union; that was their business. The Teamster-Kennedy clash became one of the most unbelievable chapters in the attempt at interference in the functions of the unions. Bear in mind, Hoffa took office somewhere around the -

Ward: Late fifties, wasn't it?

LG: Around December of 1957, thereabouts.

Ward: That would be about a year after you first ran into him in Hawaii, wasn't it?

LG: Yes, right; but by 1957 there were all kinds of other problems in the Teamsters; that was when the suit was filed by a group of so-called rank and filers against the convention, against the way it was called, against the way Hoffa was elected.

These monitors were set up. I believe the judge who handled the whole thing was named Judge (Dickinson) Letts. A battle took place within the monitors; Godfrey Schmidt; I told you his role and the testimony of Bartley Crum.

Bartley Crum went so completely out of his head at the McClellan Committee hearing that he even accused Edward Bennett Williams, chief counsel for the Teamsters and a prominent Washington lawyer, of trying to bribe him to get him not to appear.

Crum also accused some general who was head of a public relations firm in Chicago, to the point where the Washington Post issued quite a blast against Bartley Crum and the use of the McClellan Committee as a forum for every kind of irresponsible accusation, where a witness couldn't be held to account. Bartley Crum looked like a complete fool by the time he got through - that, combined with this other testimony that I mentioned to you.

LG: Later on, Schmidt was removed as a monitor, and there was an attempt to put in another monitor who had been with the FBI; the Teamsters could show that he had played a prominent role against the Teamsters Union, so that all the struggle to get impartial monitors didn't work out.

Hoffa was trying to hold a special convention in 1960, as I recall, while this battle was going on, particularly with Bobby Kennedy. Bobby Kennedy even set up a special bureau of the Department of Justice when he got into office as Attorney-General, a special team which was out to get Hoffa.

Finally the monitors were shook loose by the Teamsters; they had their convention in 1960 and it was finally okayed by an appellate court where Judge Letts was over-ridden, and the thing got back on the beam. There's no question in my mind that there was a combination of Bobby Kennedy, the McClellan Committee, the forces that were behind Kennedy-Landrum-Griffin and the AFL-CIO, to do a job on one man and on the Teamsters Union.

Ward: So Hoffa found a friend in the ILWU?

LG: Yes. I don't think it ever meant that Hoffa changed his thinking. I recall a great deal of time was spent trying to convince Hoffa that he might do better figuring out ways and means of going directly to his own membership than to rely entirely on the manipulations of the lawyers. At one point it got to the stage where Hoffa was out-lawyering the lawyers. He had a whole staff of these people back there. Harry met with him a number of times on the thing. I discussed it, but I wouldn't say with a great deal of success -

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Ward: You were saying that you were trying to persuade Hoffa to go more to his rank and file -

Men With Brass Balls

LG: And to go to the public. As far as I could see the accusations against Hoffa were unfounded. I'm not saying he didn't know some of the people with the brass balls - the ones I described to you. There were some very admirable things about him.

His move toward a national contract did not mean that he intended to do any of the things for which he was being accused. There was an atmosphere that the McClellan Committee and Bobby Kennedy were trying to build up where the objective of Hoffa was to have a quickie strike of all the trucking industry.

Hoffa discussed these things very frankly; he said, "That would be damn foolish. I'd be better off, in the case of a showdown, to take these things conference by conference, rather than going to a national showdown." He understood leverage, particularly in an industry like that, which is quite complicated. He managed to put it together; the national conferences of warehouses, conferences in the areas of airlines; in the various divisions of the Teamsters Union - 16 different divisions - so that he was doing a job of building up their bargaining structure.

When we talked to him about a transport federation he was more than a little receptive - he saw this as a natural in terms of the general bargaining power of the unions involved, their ability to make substantial gains, not necessarily by arduous or expensive strikes; in other words, the ending of the jurisdictional battles, the pooling of the bargaining strength, would get very salutory results.

I think he had visions of a transport union not too different from the Transport and General Workers of England, which encompasses trucking, porters, as they call them, and longshoremen all together in one union.

LG: There were a lot of sessions with Hoffa. Hoffa was more than receptive about sitting down with both the ILWU and the ILA with the general objective of seeing if some sort of a rapport could be established; some machinery to consider some of the jurisdictional problems that were looming as a result of containerization.

There was a session in the fall of 1958 at the Teamster headquarters. Both the ILA and the ILWU were invited to attend. It is true that later on Hoffa sort of soured in his relationships with the ILA, making the remark, "Please don't ask me to put together another session with these guys." He felt that they did not have the proper kind of independence nor the same degree of reliability in keeping their commitments.

Ward: Did you agree with him more or less on that?

LG: I didn't completely agree. Maybe because we're a more persistent bunch; but you couldn't argue with what he was saying.

Ward: It was easier to deal with Hoffa than the ILA, though?

LG: Oh, no question about that. It could also be that he smelled something that turned out to be pretty accurate; the primary push on the part of the ILA would be to go back in the AFL, which they eventually did. They were in a position to say, okay, now Ryan is out; we've cleaned things up.

The New York Port Commission had moved in with the waterfront hiring hall, or the Waterfront Commission as they called it - the Bi-State Commission of New York and New Jersey. As a matter of fact, the Waterfront Commission moved in and by a tax on the industry - I forget how much it was - got the funds to set up waterfront hiring halls, which are still in operation to this day, even though the ILA wanted to shake them loose and tried to take over direct hiring themselves, like we have on the west coast.

That was a typical example of what happens when bureaucrats have a chance to build themselves an empire. They moved in and stayed there, that's all.

LG: They got the head of the camel in the tent, and the camel has been there ever since. These things were used by the ILA to clean up their credentials for re-admittance into the AFL-CIO.

In the case of the ILWU, things moved very quickly with Hoffa; he didn't stall around. For example, when it came to setting up some machinery to try to coordinate our mutual interests and to take care of overlapping jurisdictional problems, the machinery was set up on the west coast . . . .

Ward: The Western Conference?

LG: Right, with Einar Mohn; the machinery on the west coast was set up in 1958 to take care of some of these problems; the committee was supposed to meet quarterly. No matter what the accusations were about any hanky-panky in the Teamsters anywhere else in the country, they sure as heck didn't apply out here on the west coast.

It might have been one of the reasons why Einar Mohn felt very keenly about having an insured pension plan; his huge pension plan on the west coast is still insured by Prudential. It is not a trusteed plan, even though I think insured plans are on the heavy side, a bit expensive, and not nearly as responsive to the needs of an industry as a trusteed plan. It could very well be that was Einar Mohn's way of walking around problems which had arisen in places.

The McClellan Committee: what bothered us was that they knew perfectly well what kind of a union we were, and that they were making cooperation sound like corruption, solidarity sound like sin. We said, "Sure, we have dozens and dozens of overlapping problems; in the case of longshore, the problem of jurisdiction; who does what work around the waterfront."

We had made painstaking efforts in that regard, not all of them completely successful. Particularly when the 1961 agreement was first launched, there were problems with the Teamsters, and we tried to resolve them. I recall spending a lot of time with Ted Merrill; he was with the Teamsters in Los

LG: Angeles and was chairman of the Teamster side of this joint committee. I was trying to convince him -later on it had a little bit of success- to go for something similar to what the longshoremen have gotten. I said, "You want a piece of the machine."

Ward: The savings created by the machine?

LG: The savings created by the machine. They made a bit of progress later, when they began to tax some of these piggy-back trucks, a truck body on wheels. I don't know whether you've ever seen these strings of freight cars going across country sometimes; a hundred at a time. The trucking companies discovered that was a lot cheaper than driving the truck all the way to the east coast; simply roll them on to a flat bed freight car and there they go.

The Teamsters finally did impose some kind of a tax, but that's as close as they came to something like the mechanization that we launched on the waterfront.

Bear in mind, these were all unions that were not affiliated with the AFL-CIO; the ILA, the Teamsters, the ILWU. I think that in many ways Harry identified with Hoffa's problems. In other words, it was just another effort to put away a union guy who was a pretty effective leader. He had a lot of charisma. Even the papers like The Wall Street Journal ran stories to the effect that the best they could find out, at the peak of the McClellan Committee action against him, was that certain poor investments had been made by the Central States Conference.

Ward: I think it is fair to say that nobody ever called Harry a crook.

LG: No.

Ward: And no one ever called Hoffa a Red.

LG: Yet, as far as the System is concerned - and there I use a capitalized letter, System - in its own crazy way crooks and Reds wind up in the same bag.

LG: Sure, the people who make the accusations approach things from different ends of the spectrum, but if you take a look-see at the net result in terms of whether a union has the right to elect whom it pleases and to change whom it pleases, you get down to the fundamental issues, the rights of the union. In a crazy way all of these efforts really add up that it's another way of saying that the membership is not competent to run its own affairs.

I know all the arguments on how tough it is to make changes at times, and I know how tough it can be, too. I'm aware that there are times when good solid progressives like George Andersen resorted to some court action because of the "B" membership of the Boilermakers (Union) for black members during the war.

Yet in the long pull, I can't see where these courts, Landrum-Griffin or Taft-Hartley, have done a damn bit of good. I subscribe in full to what Lewis said before the McClellan Committee; by the way, that was his swan song, I guess. I think it was 1959 or '60 when he appeared before the McClellan Committee, or this alter ego of theirs - I forget the name of that committee. He held forth for about three hours on what was wrong with the McClellan Committee in its efforts to police labor and he did a fantastic job.

Lewis had that qualification; without notes, no prepared statements, and yet every sentence complete ideas, complete thoughts. Lewis was also quite a dramatist; a forum of that sort was perfect for him. The fundamental issue, the point he kept driving home, was that all these efforts were to take over the affairs of the unions because the natives could not handle things themselves.

Ward: Well, why didn't the rapport between the ILWU and the IBT spread beyond the warehouse situation?

LG: There was an attempt; in the initial west coast committee set up with the Western Conference of Teamsters, the efforts were to resolve problems around jurisdiction, because of the container moving in on the waterfront. It is true that the longshoremen did not have the same immediacy of rapport with the Teamsters Union that the warehousemen have.

LG: The longshore contract could pretty well stand on its own feet. It was a separate document, not necessarily contingent on joint operation with the Teamsters. An understanding with the Teamsters was very important, not just to resolve any problems of overlapping jurisdiction, but also in the event of any kind of economic difficulty, to insure support.

It did not mature into the kind of full-blown organization the Warehousemen developed for obvious reasons; in the case of the Warehousemen, the nub of our relationship with the Teamsters was right here in the bay area; here, of course, we had as many chips on the table as they had.

Ward: Doing the identical work under identical conditions?

LG: Yes, and in many cases overlapping contracts; in some cases dealing with groups of employers where even though the employer groups might be somewhat different, fundamentally they were all dealing with warehousemen, one way or another. Warehouse, of course, was bound to have more possibility for direct contact.

For example, it was in the sixties; Harry was under the weather, very bad cold, and the Western Conference of Teamsters was meeting here in San Francisco; I came down to address them. Here were a lot of the guys against whom we had gone into battle, but the reception was cordial.

We never stopped our efforts to get along with the Teamsters' Union, although it's true that things got sticky, insofar as the Teamsters themselves were concerned, with the renewed attempts to get Hoffa which finally wound up with his indictment and conviction; then, of course, (Vice-President Frank) Fitzsimmons took over.

Ward: Did he attempt to carry on with these ideas?

LG: Yes, we did try to carry them out with Fitzsimmons. He was, and has continued to be, very friendly with the ILWU. No great headache in that regard. I began to attend the annual meetings of the Teamster Warehouse Division, and I was there as secretary of the ILWU. There was a good deal of admiration on the part of these Teamsters for the job being done in warehouse.

LG: The master agreement was something new to them, in most cases. We noticed that many of their agreements were separated by industrial groupings. In other words, public warehouse agreements might be one agreement, sometimes separated by locals, dependent on the size of the area. Los Angeles, for example, your grocery warehousemen were in one local, while the public warehousemen were in another local.

Our working relationship was good. Even after we set up the Northern California Warehouse Council, on several occasions we would foray out and give locals in other parts of the coast a hand. They would be primarily Teamster locals; we made appearances in places like Seattle and Portland when the contracts were reaching a deadline. Where we needed Teamster help in the case of warehouse negotiations in L.A., invariably we could get some help from the Teamsters Union.

I'm not saying it was easy; it takes a great deal of patience. In the 1950s the Teamsters in some organizing campaigns would put out leaflets allegedly by the ILWU. Later on I used to rib them and say, "If you're going to put out leaflets in our name, at least check the copy; we might not have any objection at all."

During those years, the forties and the fifties, the Teamsters would organize because they were going to save the employers from that dreadful ILWU. It required a good deal of patience; you just had to keep your eye on the main goal, that we were able to get results out of the ILWU-Teamster alliance, particularly in Warehouse. Never got quite as good results in Longshore, true . . . .

Ward: So the cooperation existed on the west coast where both unions had warehouses, but really didn't go beyond that?

LG: There were efforts to go beyond that. Again I have to go back to the atmosphere of the time, and particularly Hoffa's role. I mentioned Hal Gibbons; he was at that meeting of the Western Conference. Hoffa was there; Einar Mohn was chairing the meeting. We had some headache with the office workers around the warehouses; Hal's reaction was to support

LG: us on it, although there again you have this anarchy within the Teamsters where sometimes leadership can be applied and sometimes it can't.

Another example, where the Teamsters in the course of one of their Executive Board meetings, must have had a discussion of the whole role of warehousemen in the loading of trucks. There had always been this problem around warehouses; we had taken the position that if a truck was left there without the driver, then it's no different than freight cars and a warehouseman loads it.

In some places, the Teamsters put on quite a drive to put lumpers on the docks; lumpers originally were just part time labor. Sometimes they became regular workers around the docks working for the trucking company. This became a running dispute in some cases. By and large the Teamster Warehouse locals supported us around here, including some very trying times.

But it was during that time when there was a discussion of the same issue in the General Executive Board of the Teamsters Union. Hoffa took the lead that any member of the Teamsters could load a truck - a Teamster warehouseman or a driver. Around here that would be perfectly okay, if it did not exclude the ILWU.

About two or three weeks after that I got a copy of a letter that had been sent out by the San Francisco Employers Council: they were soliciting members from among warehouse employers, including warehouse employers who had contracts with the ILWU, and the main sales argument they were using was that if they joined up with the San Francisco Employers Council, through their relationship with the Teamsters their warehousemen could then load the trucks.

I remember taking a trip to Washington with a copy of this and taking it up with Hoffa. I said, "Look, see what they're doing here - the employers are using it to raid the ILWU, or to encourage raiding." Hoffa didn't hesitate a hair to clear that one up. He called in his secretary, dictated a clarification and gave me a copy.

LG: "I just want to make it perfectly clear that anything referred to in the General Executive Board as to what Teamster-Warehousemen could do in loading a truck, applies equally to ILWU Warehousemen," he said. So, the guy could be very forthright and very quick and very direct.

Because of Hoffa, in 1958 or '59 - there was an attempt to resolve the running battle that had been going on between the ILWU and the Teamsters in Hawaii. That was the struggle between Jack Hall and Arthur Rutledge. It must have been in 1960 because we had won the 21 cents wage increase, which really stood out very sharply.

Larry Steinberg, who was an assistant to Hoffa and an old friend of Harold Gibbons, went out to Hawaii to hammer out an understanding with Rutledge. Einar Mohn had a much more constructive attitude than anybody could automatically expect. His attitude, for example, on Rutledge was that it was a waste of time - his wearing two hats. He wore the hat of the Teamsters Union, and he also wore the hat of the Hotel Workers Union.

I pretty well had a good understanding with Steinberg and also with Einar Mohn and Harold Gibbons, although none of them were very successful in getting across to Rutledge. This crazy anarchy goes on in the Teamsters Union; at times there's an enormous amount of autonomy; at other times they can impose a fair amount of discipline.

But the point I kept hammering over the years, was, "We've got certain rights here in Hawaii in terms of the pioneering of organization in all these outside islands.' Let's leave Honolulu alone for a while, but the people who did the organizing in sugar and pineapple over on Maui, or Kauai or the Big Island were members of the ILWU."

Now mechanization is coming along; mechanization which is the result of the ILWU pressing for higher and higher wage scales. I discussed this at great length with Jack early in our campaigns; we felt there were to be enormous changes after the war, and those did take place.

LG: Out of World War II came all kinds of new equipment, new machinery, the sort of things they were using in the South Pacific. Pretty soon, these were being adapted to mechanical harvesting; roads were being built, huge turna haulers were being introduced. Instead of the cane going on little tiny railroads or on flumes, it was being hauled by trucks up to 40 tons.

The industry was being revolutionized to the point where all handcutting of cane disappeared and enormous amounts of mechanization took place. My point to Steinberg, Einar Mohn and others in the Teamsters Union is that we are the ones who pioneered in the organization of the outside islands. Hotels were coming along and our people would be looking for jobs. There's no other place to work, because on most of those islands the work available to people is negligible.

Ward: Plantations and/or hotels, huh?

LG: Right now, for example, you take a look at an island like Maui; if you eliminate sugar, there's a pineapple plantation - Maui Pine; there are two sugar plantations, HC&S and Pioneer Mill; you eliminate those - the tourist industry is not an industry, it's a service - and you have eliminated 90 percent of the work force.

Obviously, the push on the part of our people would be that if these jobs opened up and the jobs began to shrink on the plantations, this is where they would be looking for work. A lot of our people were phased out on a plantation like Kohala on the Big Island. A good many of them found work at the big hotel, the Moana Kea, the Rockefeller hotel on the Big Island. So, they understood this.

The man who would never accept this was Rutledge. After a while it became manifest why; the Hotel Workers Union had what they called certain top-drawer deals. The top-drawer deals were with outfits like the Sheraton and with Hyatt House; maybe with the Hilton, too. So, there's been an understanding between that union and these big chains that as new ones open up they almost automatically get recognition.

LG: I suppose that the employers were not going to bargain for any trouble with the union in other places, though to what degree they would have had any trouble is another story; but Mohn and Steinberg never saw it that way. They thought that the position the ILWU took was pretty logical. All kinds of attempts were made to straighten things out with Rutledge, but they didn't work out.

Ward: He still has the Hotel Workers?

LG: He still has the Hotel Workers, although he lost out there in an election. Somebody else got elected. He still has the Teamsters Union there. I recall one trip; Mohn was down there when we met with Rutledge; Mohn was saying, "Look, if you don't move, Honolulu is going to settle down into an open shop town like Los Angeles. You have the chance to move; the ILWU is willing to work with you, set up a joint organizing committee," - which we did for a while.

But the moment it was convenient for Rutledge to jump the traces, he did. Just start at the airport and work your way down, organize every damn thing in sight. The Teamsters don't have even all the teamsters organized. Mohn's attitude was very constructive.

Ward: Harry got along with Rutledge pretty well?

LG: No; when it came to these basic issues of organization, he didn't fundamentally disagree with Jack (Hall). Maybe Harry wasn't too happy about the organization of the hotel workers, but he could see why we were moving there, or why Jack did. He liked some of the successes that were picked up; places like the Moana Kea Hotel, big places like the Kanapali and a number of hotels we have under contract right now in other sections of the tourist industry.

However, the running feud with Rutledge has not done any good. In some cases like the project in Wailea, it's Inter-Continental under a contract with Alexander Baldwin, it just stays open shop. That's what happens when you get this kind of conflict.

LG: All I'm pointing out is that it was a very rapid development, the cooperation with the Teamsters there.

Teamsters v. Farm Workers

Ward: Wasn't there a period when ILWU cooperation with the Teamsters got in the way of any help the ILWU might have otherwise given to Cesar Chavez and the Farm Workers?

LG: Yes and no . . . .

Ward: Harry was supposed to have been pretty opposed to Chavez and the Farm Worker movement at one time.

LG: That's at a later date; unless these things are seen in time sequence, I don't think it holds up. While it is true that he was hostile to Chavez for a while, some of the accusations made were completely unfounded and uncalled for . . . .

Ward: You mean that Harry made against Chavez?

LG: Yes; but I maintained a friendly relationship with Chavez during all that time -

Ward: But were Harry's accusations against Chavez based on his relationship with the Teamsters or what?

LG: No, I don't think so. Frankly, I don't know what they were founded on. I recall a session over at Harry's house with Cesar Chavez. At that time, both Harry and I were telling Cesar that he might do much better working with the Teamsters, or even as a division of the Teamsters.

He was in the AFofL and he was on the move; I think they had started that peregrination from Delano to Sacramento.

Ward: Oh, yes, it was to wind up in Sacramento on Easter Sunday, and Governor Pat Brown wouldn't attend.

LG: Pat Brown was . . . .

Ward: He was having Easter with his family someplace else.

LG: Or down at Palm Springs with Frank Sinatra. But I recall at that session, Harry was very cordial with Cesar, very friendly. Cesar's attitude at the time was "Well, we could do with two ILWUs." Interesting formulation. In other words, a Farm Workers Union, somewhat along the same principles and ideas and policies of the ILWU, would be a good thing.

But that gets into another scene. During those periods when Cesar started organizing, I was seeing a great deal of the Teamsters. Einar Mohn was very cooperative in setting up the Council for Health Plan Alternatives, where we were able to get the entire labor movement encompassed in a program for some alternative to the existing method of delivering and charging for health care.

Mohn was very helpful there. Stuck with it for a long time until it ran out of money. But at that time, there also emerged the Alliance for Labor Action. Do you recall the time when Reuther (Walter Reuther, president of the United Auto Workers) left the AFofL in the sixties?

Ward: Oh, Reuther, yes.

LG: When Reuther left he set up the Alliance for Labor Action.

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LG: I was very outspoken in my support for Cesar. I went so far as to try to set up machinery with the Teamsters, the Auto Workers and the ILWU to act in consultation with Cesar Chavez and to try to avoid some of the jurisdictional problems that were cropping up, particularly things like moving packing sheds out into the fields, one of the developments going on for some years and changing the nature of the industry.

But it's true that there were times when I might have been the only person who insisted that I was going to maintain a relationship with both the Teamsters and the Farm Workers. I don't recall its ever resulting in a real beef with the Teamsters. I don't think they were too happy about it.

LG: Mohn never felt that keenly about the organization of Farm Workers, but I think he went along with it. He was a little bit irritated about the role of the Catholic bishops; he thought they would be doing better just taking care of our souls. I'll admit there are some things in the Farm Workers which are a little bit hard to handle, like the Lady of Guadalupe.

On the other hand there's no question that Chavez was doing quite a job in making a breakthrough when nobody else could. As a matter of fact, the ILWU tried, sometime in the fifties or early sixties. We had a man named Lou Krainack. He had some experience with farm workers and we had him on our payroll for a while to see what could be done, but he couldn't find the handles to make it move.

Ward: Let me see; there were before him some attempts, three or four, to try to get somewhere, but they didn't really jell.

LG: That's right; none of it jelled. The Packinghouse Workers; then UCAPAWA tried; they settled down and tried to get something done in the canneries. We made a bit of an effort and got no place. But Cesar found the handles.

What's more important, though, I don't want to get off of Hoffa. This was a period of very rapid movement there in '57, '58; these developing alliances and understandings with the Teamsters Union; our attempts to work things out with the ILA, even to get a common expiration date. At one point we had the longshore contract so written that we could shift the expiration date and provide a common expiration date with the east coast. But none of this ever panned out with the ILA.

Ward: But the ILA contact ended with the Hawaii convention, didn't it?

LG: I think so.

Ward: It seemed to me rather dramatic; the decision not to get along.

LG: Yes. I felt the ILA thing was stumbling all over the place long before then. I was one of those who recommended that Velson be pulled back from the east coast because I felt that it had become strictly a brain picking operation. He was able to help out in some regards, but in terms of getting anything fundamental done, even a simple thing like coordinated bargaining or a common expiration date - not even reaching the maturity of the Northern California Warehouse Council - we weren't coming anywhere near it.

The closest we ever got was joint action in Washington, D.C. around the Longshore and Harbor Workers Act, even though we had given them unstinting support. It just didn't jell. We came fairly close in 1955, but it kept sliding. With Hoffa in the picture, perhaps it could have shifted.

Ward: Would you say that Hoffa's conviction and incarceration was damaging to attempts at rapport with the Teamsters?

LG: With our rapport to the Teamsters? Or cooperation? Well, the California Warehouse Council remains intact to this day . . . .

Ward: But on a national level -

LG: But on a larger level, yes, I guess it stumbled somewhat, yes. It didn't have the same amount of drive. If Hoffa had been in charge, it might have been a different story.

That brings us to a different era. I'm talking about this period of very rapid development and cooperation with the IBT, the efforts on the part of Hoffa to pull together the ILWU and the ILA and his concurrence with the idea of a transport federation, something that would be very effective. These days, there's a more apparent need for it because your seafaring unions are not doing too well.

There are enormous inroads by mechanization as in the case of longshore; so it's a common alliance that makes a great deal of sense. Hoffa stood foursquare for it; so did Harry; but the ILA dragged

LG: its feet. It could never get beyond a conversation between ourselves and the Teamsters, and that wasn't quite enough to do it. As to whether the seafaring unions would come along, that's all retrospective; there's no way of measuring that.

Ward: Well, can we move on to the time when you actually discussed affiliation between the ILWU and the ILA?

LG: Okay, an attempt to wind up that whole era and mention a couple of things that happened during this time. In 1958 we were making gains when most unions were not. In 1960, which was generally classified as a lean year for labor, we did very well. The Hawaii statehood battle finally was won in 1959. I've already told you how the McClellan Committee helped Quinn win out in Hawaii over Burns, even though, by and large, the election should have been a victory for us.

Not too long after the election of Quinn, he appeared before an ILWU convention and made a pretty shabby attack on the union. I guess part of it was just grand-standing, bearding the lion in his den. He came before an ILWU Local 142 convention to tell us that we had done a great job but we should keep our noses out of things like foreign policy, war and peace, and what have you.

I figured it was my job to answer him, so I dug up some of our convention proceedings; I think it was in the 1963 or 1965 convention where we adopted a ten point program on peace. Each of these points might have been premature, but right just the same. So I took a bit of time there at the convention to answer him and we got some good reactions on that, and the delegates at the Local 142 convention promptly adopted a statement of policy reaffirming our position on all these things.

Harry was subpoenaed by the un-American Activities Committee some time in April of 1959, and the counsel for the committee suggested that perhaps we wouldn't get visas to Japan. He was partly right - I didn't get a visa. The All-Pacific and Asian Dockworkers Conference took place in May of that year in Japan.

Ward: That was because of your trouble in England?

LG: I don't know. I think it was a matter of them just looking for any excuse; they had one handy in my case. What do you call it? Token diplomacy? So, these were some of the developments. It was in '59 when Kruschchev visited the Longshore hall; both Harry and St. Sure were there, I mentioned that. This is where you get into this odd dichotomy in St. Sure's character, you see, which I'll admit you can't explain all the time. I think he still felt that as an individual he could do things, even though he was there primarily to represent the employers; and still to me the guy was a fairly decent guy on some scores, which he was on things like civil liberties, but he was not going to do a bum job for the employers either, and he finally did.

In regard to the first mechanization agreement in '60, which went into effect in 1961, I want to make one correction. I made a statement about "men and machines may be added in event of - "

Ward: Oh, "may" changed to "shall"?

LG: It wasn't exactly the way the thing was written. It was finally written that "if the workload was onerous, the employers would add men or machines". The employers could always decide it was not onerous; that was the problem. And that became a long controversy by itself, because the guys could see this as a breakdown of conditions.

But by and large, the mechanization agreement was adopted by better than a two to one vote of the longshoremen. Later on, we began to get a little feedback when they realized how the employers could implement it.

How Kennedy Beat Nixon

LG: In 1960 there was a joint mass meeting of the Teamsters and the ILWU over in Oakland, the Oakland Auditorium, sponsored by the educational committee of Local 70 of the Teamsters. Hoffa was supposed to speak, together with Harry. Harry spoke.

LG: At the last minute the McClellan Committee subpoenaed Hoffa for the following morning on that running goddam debate of theirs so that he could not make the meeting; he had to address it by telephone. The afternoon he was supposed to appear, McClellan put his committee hearing over a month.

Ward: It was just so Hoffa couldn't come?

LG: Yes. Harold Gibbons spoke in place of Hoffa. When Chili was around he got along with Local 70 of the Teamsters very well. He always had a close personal relationship with a number of the officials in the Teamsters Union; part of the Portuguese group. I guess if anything we were driven further together by Kennedy. When John Kennedy ran for President, in a speech he made in Salt Lake in 1960, he said that an effective attorney-general would get rid of Harry Bridges and Jimmy Hoffa. That effective attorney general later took office and . . . .

Ward: He tried hard - Bobby Kennedy - and he got Hoffa.

LG: Yes, he got Hoffa, but he missed when he came to Harry. In 1960, early in the year, we had an enlarged Executive Board meeting on the question of political action and where we were going; the general reaction was that we weren't going to support anybody who had been constantly teeing off on us or on Hoffa, and that the McClellan Committee was a real disgrace; that everything that came out of it, like the Landrum-Griffin Act, was just another set-back for labor; on top of Taft-Hartley, now Landrum-Griffin. None of these things would accomplish anything in terms of the basic purposes of trade unionism.

Ward: Could you round out the fifties?

LG: I'd say they ended with the Kennedy election. We refused to endorse Kennedy or Nixon. The only part of the International which went its own way was Hawaii. Hawaii endorsed Nixon. Jack Hall felt that keenly about the attack on the Teamsters, the attack on Harry. I was in Hawaii when Nixon turned up there to speak as a candidate.

Ward: That was the election where Kennedy beat him by a hair.

LG: Yes. That election warrants further investigation. The first results out of Hawaii were that Nixon won. I think that when they saw the results nationally, there might have been a quick recount. It's very funny how that got shifted around.

When Nixon appeared down there, somebody called Jack and asked him whether he wanted to meet Nixon. I happened to be there at the time, and I came by Jack's house, talked about it and agreed that if he was going to meet Nixon, why not give him a document.

We drafted a document simply trying to give him some kind of a labor policy that if elected he did not intend to play around in the camp of organized labor; that he intended to handle labor issues impartially, and do the job which the Department of Labor was assigned to do and not be party to any witch-hunts.

Actually, I think that's the closest we ever came to electing a President. If he had adopted that policy . . . . it didn't take many votes - either Illinois or Pennsylvania.

Ward: Illinois, I think. Well, there's always been a belief that (Mayor Richard) Daley in Chicago swung the election to Kennedy by virtue of the Chicago machine.

LG: Both of these states had large union memberships, and we felt that there was a lot of hostility on the part of labor to the McClellan Committee.

Ward: Did this meeting with Nixon take place?

LG: The meeting took place; Jack handed him this envelope -

Ward: Did you go along?

LG: No. Jack just met him, shook hands and gave him this envelope. The newspapers kept asking Jack what's in the envelope. Jack said, "If Mr. Nixon wants to release this, it's entirely his business; it's just a private memorandum." And he left it there; of course, we got ten times more publicity that way.

Ward: Did Nixon ever do anything with it?

LG: He never released the contents. If you look back at the 1960 election campaign, never did Nixon have any kind of a labor policy. It was never mentioned during the entire campaign.

Obviously, when we entered the Kennedy era, it was not with a great deal of jubilation. Our union came out with this no endorsement position and I recall the thousands of mailings we did; we would take every fifth doctor and every fifth dentist, say, and point out what Kennedy had said, that the next attorney general would get rid of Harry and Hoffa. So, that rounded out that era.

Ward: I see. That winds up the fifties.

LG: I think it does.

BRIDGES-ILA v. GOLDBLATT

(Interview 33: 7 November, 1978)

Sharp Disputes Among The Leadership

Ward: We were going to get into the sixties and the question of Teamster affiliation.

LG: Let me go briefly over some things that were happening during the sixties.

Ward: Very good.

LG: I tried to get across the idea that the end of the fifties began to see quite a change. The harassment, while not completely over, was pretty well gone. There was still some running guerilla warfare, like the attempt of the government to impose a fine by Internal Revenue; all the monies collected on behalf of the Bridges-Robertson-Schmidt Defense were personal income to the defendants, and they owed income tax on these funds.

Of course, none of them had ever seen a dime of this; the defense committee had to work on a shoestring half the time. The attorneys were paid very little. Some of our members said, "To hell with that noise; if anybody owes anybody money, it's the government that owes us money - we had to dig into our jeans and pony up the dough on a lot of harassment that didn't make a damn bit of sense."

I recall the Internal Revenue case being settled for some token amount, which as far as we were concerned was no admission of guilt or agreement

LG: with the government; it just turned out to be an awful lot cheaper than having still another case in court.

So, these things continued, as well as a number of moves against the unions who were friends of ours, like the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers. As a matter of fact, there were a series of Taft-Hartley cases, including conspiracy cases. There was the endless campaign to destroy the Marine Cooks and Stewards, which finally was done.

Ward: That was before the sixties -

LG: Late fifties or early sixties. Come the end of the fifties, a lot of this had changed and a number of possibilities opened up, including some form of cooperation with the ILA. It sort of stumbled and staggered along.

Ward: Climaxed in that Hawaii convention, didn't it?

LG: It really climaxed earlier, because we couldn't even get the most elementary, simple trade union understanding with them, such as a common expiration date.

Ward: If that's true, what was the point in bringing these east coast ILA leaders out to Hawaii and having them sit up there and have Teddy Gleason make a speech to the convention, and all that jazz?

LG: I personally became quite jaundiced with the whole operation.

Ward: Well, some people blamed you for dumping the ILA, isn't that true?

LG: Yes, some people did that - it's this business of looking for witches. I don't think that I had to do that much. The union as a whole was very cool to the idea; a few supporters, one or two people in L. A., a young man who is dead now, pretty outspoken in support of the ILA. I don't think he had that much following in the membership.

There might have been a little vestigial support among some of the locals which had been members of the ILA, even long after we had become part of the

LG: ILWU; some up at Port Angeles. Well, I would say there was not that much support even in longshore for the ILA. There was no way for the men to see any real progress in this direction.

Whatever progress there was we had to pump into it; blowing up little things, especially some joint legislative work around something that obviously was of mutual interest. But when it came to any trade union steps, the most preliminary steps . . .

Ward: You mean questions like wages, hours and working conditions?

LG: Yes, around contracts, around expiration dates - I'm not even talking about joint bargaining. There are all kinds of intermediate steps short of a complete joint bargaining structure.

None of these things materialized, so if you ask why do they appear at the ILWU convention in 1971, the only conclusion I can reach is that notwithstanding the fact that these things did not materialize, Harry was still more and more determined, particularly toward the end of the sixties, to see whether reaffiliation could be implemented.

In those latter years in the sixties, he was speaking repeatedly of the offer on the part of the ILA that we could always go back as District 38. District 38 is what we had been on the west coast prior to disaffiliation from the ILA.

Ward: Part of the sentimental value, I suppose.

LG: This is where you get into a difficult area for me. When I start going through that period, I can't help but go through an awful lot of introspection. At what point did certain things begin to shift and change in the internal feelings within the ILWU, particularly as to how Harry felt about certain things and how I felt and which later wound up in a very abrasive situation, an attempt by Harry to impose retirement at age 63 at the 1971 convention?

Ward: Which was aimed directly at you.

LG: It was as clear as a bell - a man would have to be blind drunk for the whole convention not to know it.

Ward: Well, that was more or less within the union, except for gossip. As this thing got worse, Harry is quoted in The Chronicle, without retraction, when asked who was going to succeed him, as saying, "Anybody but Goldblatt." That's getting pretty rough, isn't it?

LG: Sure, but he was quoted in an L. A. paper where somebody asked Harry if he might be retiring and would I be running for president, and Harry answered, "Over my dead body."

Ward: Well, that sort of statement has a background?

LG: Exactly. That's the reason it gets so difficult for me to come to grips with it. Not that I can't come to grips with the facts because they're there; they speak for themselves.

Ward: Well, instead of trying to analyze the facts, simply state them and let whoever studies this stuff in the future draw his own conclusions. I think that's the proper thing to do.

LG: Maybe so - but -

Ward: But, look -

LG: I mean people don't need - that's very simplistic on your part, by the way. People don't give up that easy on questions -

Ward: You mean that -

LG: It's not just a question of me . . . . I think that that when you have spent your life at something and when you've had such a tight and effective working relationship around a good militant program which I thought was very much in keeping with my own fundamental beliefs as a socialist; my beliefs that the role of a union went beyond the question of hours and wages; that if you see the thing begin to unravel and schisms develop, then you can't help but think "How did this take place? When did it take place? Why did it take place?"

Ideologies?

Ward: When you speak in ideological terms as you've just been doing, I've heard it said by people who should have some inside knowledge on the subject that Harry was never really a leftwinger; he was an anarcho-syndicalist. Would you subscribe to that?

LG: A lot of people say that. I'd say he was more of an anarcho-syndicalist than he was a Marxist. On the other hand, there's no question about his conviction that the Soviet Union is the first socialist country in the world. This was something that had his genuine adherence.

To say that he had no political bent is mostly wrong because that is anarcho-syndicalism plus; it's to another power or with an added ingredient; that I think would be more accurate.

A lot of people - and they have used it in discussions with me - talk about him as an anarcho-syndicalist or just a plain syndicalist. Some of the things to which he seemed to become more and more adherent, particularly in the late sixties, were definitely in this anarcho-syndicalist field: constant perorations against intellectuals . . . .

Ward: Anti-student, anti the '64 thing (the Free Speech Movement) in Berkeley . . . .

LG: Right - right. So, these are things you start looking at and you begin to wonder . . . . Well, perhaps I just refused to recognize certain things. I felt I stuck by Harry like glue all through the period of harassment and all the personal difficulties he had. Perhaps I didn't catch all the implications of his remark about St. Sure. It's one of the reasons why I would constantly turn over in my head, "Well, what's going on?"

Ward: You mean in the Terminal situation, when he made that crack about your taking advantage of St. Sure?

LG: Yeah.

Ward: You still didn't see what the background was in his thinking?

LG: I refused to accept the idea that St. Sure had gotten to Harry; or maybe the changing times or whatever it was . . . .

Ward: Well, you mentioned the well-known fact that Harry's lodestar, in one sense, was the Soviet Union. If there was any one man who was responsible for the creation of the Soviet Union it was Lenin, who was an intellectual; he certainly wasn't a worker.

LG: But this has nothing to do with Harry's thinking.

Ward: Well, it indicates a very confused thinking.

LG: Right and it's a terribly confused thinking. Harry, for example, is an omnivorous reader - always read a great deal; and yet, these constant perorations against intellectuals. What its source, I don't know.

Ward: You're generally rated as an intellectual.

LG: Well, it almost took the turn that if you read a book, you were an intellectual; if you had any ideas other than the most simplistic trade union ideas, you were an intellectual. The reference to the Free Speech Movement in Berkeley is very accurate, because at that point I began to recognize that something strange was going on. Now, these things could have had something else to do with a combination of personal factors. Harry was getting along in years; in '64 he must have been . . . .

Ward: Sixty five then.

LG: No, I think he was born in 19 . . .

Ward: When I first knew Harry I was four months older than he was; then I got to be two years older than he, somehow.

LG: I recall that. Why that was important to him, I don't know, but on some trip to Australia - -

Ward: He discovered a different record in some birth certificate.

LG: Right. I think I made a mistake in another respect -

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Ward: Lou, you were just completing a sentence in which you were saying that for a long time you were convinced that Harry was one of the few people who had absolutely no boiling point. Now what do you mean by "boiling point"?

LG: The way he managed to go through the trials - the expulsion from the CIO - the attempted raids - the 1948 longshore strike - yet maintained his integrity all through that. They could never drive him into redbaiting.

If you glance back, the tone of The Dispatcher remains the same in its devotion to issues; outspoken against the arms budget; it took on Kennedy; it took a good position on the Cuban missile crisis; it kept fighting off the redbaiters; kept plugging away at both China and Cuban trade; sent a delegation to Cuba; support of the Mine-Mill people when everybody else had walked away from them; the tone of the paper, the tone of the union remained the same.

All of these things convinced me the man had no boiling point. As a matter of fact, even when he and Nancy (Bridges' second wife) split up, my reaction was that it was because Nancy couldn't answer the bell for the fifth round; that somehow these things had gotten to her.

When it came to trying to help as best I could during that period, I was making a trip back east and Harry asked me to talk to Bob Lieberman who was Nancy's brother-in-law. It was to carry a message that if there was any beef about the whole business of the break-up, it wouldn't do much good and could do a lot of harm . . .

Ward: To whom?

LG: To Nancy. And Bob was fond of Harry and Nancy. As a matter of fact, Harry used to spend a lot of time at Bob's home when they were in the east. I don't know whether I lost Bob Lieberman's friendship,

LG: which had been a long friendship. In those things, you know, people drift in different directions. I think that was where I made a mistake.

Ward: Well, how could you lose by this talk between Harry and Bob Lieberman?

LG: I talked to Bob Lieberman; Harry asked me to talk to him.

Ward: Well, then, you weren't doing it on your own?

LG: No; but if you do those things, you're party to it -

Ward: So, it may have cost you something in your relationship with this Bob?

LG: It might have, yes. I don't know as to whether that would have been too material because when families break up that way, they're messy. There's no way to account for what people do -

Ward: Well, my father used to say - he was a lawyer in early life - the reason the law won't take the testimony of spouse against spouse is that nobody in his sane mind can understand the relationship between any male and female human being.

LG: Well, he might have been as accurate as anybody on that. If humans have learned more since, I'm not sure. And I don't think that est or rolfing helps any, either. I think perhaps where I made a mistake was that maybe Harry might not have had a boiling point, but he had a cooling point.

Ward: I was thinking that a turning point might have been a sharper definition than a boiling point.

LG: This, I think, is what began to happen. I find it difficult to handle these things because I simply refuse to accept the idea that there could really be that much of a deep-going change. I refused to accept the idea of Harry's being hostile to me.

Sure, I disagreed with him at times; that happens. Towards the latter part of the sixties, Christ Almighty! I'd sit down in an officers' meeting and he'd produce notes with ten different indictments

LG: scribbled out about my actions. And all of them meaningless. Was I secretly supporting the Black Panthers? Sure, I didn't feel terribly hostile toward the Black Panthers. I thought they were wrong; I think this reliance on guns is self-defeating.

Ward: Well, you were a supporter of Jack Hall; maybe that had something to do with it?

LG: It might have had a little bit to do with it. Jack Hall was pretty outspoken. I told you about Jack Hall and what I thought was his kuliana.

Ward: Also, the fact that when you came into the ILWU, Harry was president of the whole works. By the time of the late sixties and seventies, a membership showdown would have been something else than what it used to be.

LG: Sure, it would have been - there's no question about it. Harry might have felt abrasive, but if he felt that keenly about things there was an easy way to go at it. It didn't require this artificial nostrum that he was looking for - compulsory retirement at 63, which was patently designed to be aimed at one person; a sort of ILWU bill of attainder. The easy thing for him to have done was to have nominated a candidate against me. There's no question he could have gotten somebody to run. He had enough of a loyal following among the longshoremen. He would have had great trouble in warehouse, and I think he would have had just as big trouble in Hawaii.

Ward: Well, I think he was as well aware of that as you were. You weren't an Alvah Bessie or a Bill Glazier or Linc Fairley or any of those ILWU employees who could be controlled like that.

LG: I don't think he ever controlled Linc Fairley just like that; Linc retired because it was his compulsory retirement date.

Ward: I know, but just the same -

LG: Right. But Alvah Bessie was another thing.

Ward: Sid Roger (former editor of The Dispatcher)?

LG: Sid Roger was another thing; much more clear. That stems from one of those crazy things that happened. You try to figure out what the devil is going on and how does it make a little sense. Sometimes you tell yourself "Don't try to find rational answers for irrational things."

But no matter how often you tell yourself that, it's like trying to hit a golf ball right. You say, "You've got to keep your head down and swing through the ball." You know exactly what you're supposed to do - it's just a question why don't you do it all the time.

Even though you have a rational answer, which is not to try to explain all irrational things, you can't resist the pressure on you to try to find something. You're looking for that turning point. What happened? Perhaps you flounder; I know I do. Could it be age? Could it be ego? But we all have that. To say that I have no ego, or that you don't, would be the biggest line of bullshit the world ever heard.

Ward: You have a threshhold somewhere?

Back To The Womb?

LG: Right. Or could it be that here was a determination to round out a chapter of labor by having it begin and end with one man? We know that the person who was responsible in the main for the formation of the ILWU on the west coast was Harry. Is the whole thing rounded out by returning to the fold after it is all over?

Ward: Back to the womb?

LG: I don't think anybody as yet has an understanding of the geriatrics of people or of institutions. That's a sociological study for the future.

Ward: I'm going to try to lead you back to the '71 convention in Hawaii. Why, in view of the failure to agree between ILWU and ILA, were those leaders invited to that convention?

LG: They were invited by Harry. I was talking to Freddie Field, a man I have always been fairly fond of, and they still had the standing proposition that we should come back into the ILA as the old District 38; I guess as far as Harry was concerned, that was adequate. It just wouldn't sell; I guess he might have felt that at the '71 convention maybe it would, but nothing of the sort happened. I heard a rumor that the ILA guys thought I was getting instructions from "Pete King." I said, "I don't know Pete King. Who is he?" Turned out "Pete King" was Brooklynese for Peking.

Ward: It was supposed to be you who was getting the instructions?

LG: Yes. My feeling was that it was sort of a last desperate try; never give up.

Ward: Well, suppose the attitude of the convention had been different; suppose you had re-affiliated with the ILA, what would have happened to his position and to your position? He would have been somebody and you would have been out, is that it?

LG: Oh, no. He kept insisting there was room for all of us, and the ILA kept making that noise too; later on there was a big '71 strike, where he was still plugging away for ILA.

As a matter of fact, the whole longshore committee of which I was a part went to New York City to meet with the ILA in December 1971 or early January 1972; I think it was early January. It was winter; we couldn't meet at the hotel they had because all the water mains were broken.

Harry was very frank when our committee met by itself before we met with the ILA. Harry said point blank to the committee, "One reason I'm back here is that I think we belong back there in the ILA." There the effort was to get the ILA to give us the token support of tying up some of the container ships like the container docks over in Elizabeth, New Jersey; perhaps only for a couple of days, in support of our strike. Even this could not be accomplished; Gleason told us as far as he was concerned, it was one down, all down; he had a leader from that local who announced there was no way of tying it up.

Ward: This conference in New York took place after the Hawaii convention of '71, after they left with their tails dragging?

LG: Not with their tails dragging.

Ward: But it must have been quite a blow when they got no support on the floor of the convention.

LG: Oh, they got a couple of supporters, but they knew perfectly well, as Johnny Bowers put it, "Well, I guess we laid an egg." But that doesn't mean anything in Harry's case, where he's hell bent for something. The guy has unbelievable persistence and endurance. Christ, he'll hang in with a committee until the cows come home.

Ward: Well, here you were in New York and Teddy Gleason wouldn't . . . .

LG: As a matter of fact, while we were there the ILA was in negotiations with the employers in the same hotel where we were meeting. Gleason would shuttle back and forth, upstairs to meet with the employers and then come down. They wound up in agreement - the ILA did pretty well. I'm sure that the fact we were back there might have given the ILA a bit of a leg up, and the least he should have said was, "Thanks, fellas, for coming back and giving us a hand - that's okay."

Instead, he gave us a lecture on how to bargain, which is one thing Harry did not need; or some of the others of us. The lecture being, you put the employers in a small, smoke-filled room and wear them down, you see. Your fellas can get in another room which is light and airy and so forth.

I remarked to Harry as we walked out of there, "I guess you realize that Teddy Gleason just got through pissing in your shoes." (laughter) He wasn't happy about that remark, although he realized we were getting absolutely no place at all. We came back from there empty-handed, but I could read the handwriting on the wall on that one long before.

LG: Gleason was talking on how they pushed the Teamsters around; he always talks very tough. And I said, "Well, you know, our relations with the Teamsters are quite good." And he says, "Well, ours are good too - if we have to be!" So, I made the point very-sharply, "You know, we have a good working relationship with the Teamsters Union and we don't see any good reason for a battle with them, particularly in warehouse."

He said, "Oh, no - no, that's fine, that's fine." So, it was sort of all over the place, you couldn't get a clear answer. I think the committee realized sure there had been years of effort trying to get things together with the ILA, but they were coming a cropper.

This was not true of our relations with the Teamsters. The economics of the situation, the bargaining relationship, the source of strength, the protection and the advancement of the interests of the members of your union, require a cold-blooded approach.

I said, "If our membership is going to consider any kind of affiliation, the logic of the situation would indicate that the Teamsters make more sense to us than the ILA." I maintained this reservation: I said, "As far as our membership is concerned, at least at this stage of the game, I don't think they have any interest in any affiliation. They love the ILWU and they believe in it."

It may not be a big union, it may not be making as much progress as some other unions. I know the general theories in the labor movement right now that a union has to be somewhere around a million members these days to effectively operate as a national organization. They're smitten with this Big Is Beautiful business.

Ward: Who did you express these opinions to? Harry and the committee?

LG: Harry, our own committee, the executive board, a series of workshops. Later Harry switched around and said, "Okay, let's talk about affiliation with the Teamsters." I said that so far even minimum efforts to get cooperation out of the ILA has not worked out.

Ward: But the ILA showed some willingness, didn't they, to get the ILWU back into the ranks?

LG: Yes, but again as District 38 under their constitution, but that constitution had changed in the interim. That's what I kept pounding away at Harry; I said, "You're looking at a constitution that's back in 1934. If you read their new constitution it's another story.

"Yes, I know what arguments you can make on the longshoremen, and they're appealing arguments; you can bargain for all coasts at one time; you can bargain with all shipowners at one time; if you shut down one ship, you shut them all down for the whole nation."

Those arguments have a certain power; it's the natural feeling of workers in any industry that if they are united in that industry, they'll be better off. On the other hand, our chance of bringing this about was almost zero. All that was being proposed was that we go back in there as the old District 38.

As to what would happen to other large sections of the union which were now the majority, Warehouse and Hawaii, how can anyone show where there is anything to be gained?

Bridges Makes A Switch

LG: At the end of the sixties and the beginning of the seventies, Harry was pounding a line that the ILWU was going no place; it had gotten to the point where it was time to join the main body of labor, to get into another organization. At least the Teamsters Union had a little bit more logic to it.

The warehouse alliance is an obvious one, and the dominant union, nationally as well as on the west coast, is the Teamsters Union. Of course we also had a certain bloc of strength, some big chips in that game; there we had seen in our personal experience with Teamsters around joint bargaining, notwithstanding a lot of problems, it had been made to work.

LG: In the case of the sugar workrs, pineapple workers, the other people we had organized in Hawaii, at least there the Teamsters had done something. They had the cannery workers on the west coast; they had some of the beet sugar refineries, even though the beet sugar plants are split up, some in the Teamsters union like Great Western up around Utah; maybe some in Minnesota. Then some of them are in the Liquor and Distillery Workers which are out here.

In various efforts we made to pull together joint action around the Sugar Act, the Teamsters were able to muster the Distillery Workers to go along. To get much work out of them was quite another story. But, at least you had some contiguity of interests.

Ward: Could you give me the approximate time when Harry said, "Okay, let's drop the ILA idea and think about the Teamsters." That would be '71 or '72?

LG: Late '71 or '72, somewhere in there. Back again to the economics of the thing. One of the biggest problems confronting the longshoremen was the question of containers; there you have the direct overlap with the Teamsters. At least there was some possibility of straightening that out; a joint ILWU-Teamster committee had been set up in the sixties to function on a coast-wise basis.

True, we never managed to get the Teamsters to go along with the concept of getting a piece of the machine. So, the logic there was a great deal stronger than anything that you could present on behalf of the ILA.

Ward: Who made the pass when Harry switched from ILA to Teamsters?

LG: I think Harry went back and talked to either Fitzsimmons or Hoffa - no, I think Hoffa wasn't around. After our '69 convention, there was an important longshore caucus that took place primarily on the question of containers and whether all work around the dock area would be done entirely by ILWU members; that was one of the by-products of the mechanization agreement. In some cases the PMA upheld us, like on the business of cranes; in other cases, no dice. Employers went their own way, they also went to court;

LG: the net result was that we could not successfully resolve the container beef.

Fitzsimmons came out and spoke at the '69 convention. It was also the time that the Teamsters and Auto Workers had formed the Alliance for Labor Action; sort of a brief-lived affair. I thought we ought to join and we arranged a meeting while Fitzsimmons was here with our executive board on the ALA. Of course, he was anxious to see us in there; anything to expand the organization.

I thought at least it wasn't a rival labor movement. At least it indicated unhappiness with the existing structure of the AFl-CIO and the feeling that something ought to be done other than making like there is nothing wrong with the world, no matter what. Reuther, I'm sure, was directly responsible and perhaps got the Teamsters to go along with it; at least Fitzsimmons was going along at that time. I don't think it's around anymore.

Ward: The ALA?

LG: No, I think it died; however, I saw this thing as something fresh, a place where the union could spread its wings. Again, I go back to the opening of all these possibilities of working with the Teamsters and with other parts of the labor movement.

XXVII A MINUET WITH THE IBT

Definite Affiliation Negotiations

LG: We were making steady progress in the warehouse group. It was not confined to warehouse. There were numerous efforts on the part of the Teamsters to iron out the jurisdictional headaches in Hawaii. God knows how many of the Teamster officials gave it a whirl. Steinberg tried it down there; I recall Gibbons being down there. Einar Mohn gave it a whirl. At one point, I recall Hoffa being so irritated with Art Rutledge that he said, "I'm just going to yank his charter, that's all." I remember some conversation with him either out here or back in Washington - my remark was "Look, you have plenty of headaches."

Ward: That was because Rutledge wasn't getting along with the ILWU?

LG: No matter how many agreements you signed with him (Rutledge) they were never adhered to. The first time there was a chance to jump the traces and make a separate deal, away he went. There was also this running headache with him where he was wearing these two hats.

Ward: Well, anyway, so Fitzsimmons came out here and then there were some definite negotiations.

LG: There were lengthy negotiations with the Teamsters and a number of documents exchanged. The one thing that was constantly adhered to was that the longshoremen would have their own division in the Teamsters Union; could maintain their own caucus

LG: structure in the ILWU; elect their own Coast Committeemen; manage their own pension funds and things of that sort; conduct their own strike votes; and they would also have the right to determine their own jurisdiction.

Ward: This was the ILWU's position?

LG: Right.

Ward: That created the situation, I believe, where Fitzsimmons was quoted as saying, "The ILWU wants to join the Teamsters, but not to join them."

LG: I felt that any discussion with the ILWU members which did not guarantee them their autonomy would fall on absolutely deaf ears. This is something that cannot be overlooked - I don't give a damn who it is; you can't wipe out years of history.

People who grew up in this union not only love the union but it has become a way of life. The basic internal democracy of the ILWU has not changed. Sure, in some places it stumbles around a bit; you might not get the kind of attendance you want at union meetings; you might not get all the participation you'd like to see in the daily work of the union, but fundamentally the basic rank and file democratic structure remains; periodic elections; simple things like the recall petition, where 15 percent of the members in a local can automatically recall an officer and then he has to stand trial; the business of being elected for only two terms and then returning to the job, which can be both good and bad.

The good feature of it is the fact that it makes every officer highly responsive to the members. On the other hand, as contracts get more complicated with pensions and health and welfare plans and dental plans and vacation plans, there's a heavy reliance on experts. One of the reasons it can be done is because on a coast-wise level they have other machinery that has a good deal more continuity, like the Coast Committee and certain staff personnel.

Problems With The ILWU Constitution

Ward: And then you have the International officers too.

LG: Right, and staff personnel.

Ward: That part of the two-year rule started off with Harry.

LG: Correct. And other things in the constitution which resulted in all kinds of difficulties in the union, some of them extremely unfair. I recall when I first joined the union there was a provision in the constitution where you had to be a delegate from your own local to run for office.

Well, some locals had a regular practice of electing, in many cases, very competent men and waiting for two years to deliberately knock them out of office by not electing them as delegates, a sort of peculiar anarchy; a business of defiance and of telling the International "That's the way we like it." Just make people bounce and jump.

And I remember a whole series of casualties out of the Portland local. Cole Jackman, who had once been a member of the Coast Committee and a very competent man, lost out because of the delegate rule. Roscoe Craycraft, who had been secretary of the International for a while, lost out for the same reason.

Matt Meehan, one of the first secretaries of the International union, the same thing. Matt Meehan was a tower of strength. And this was a regular practice until finally the constitution was changed, where if a man was in office, he had the right to run to succeed himself. Union democracy can take many forms, and it can raise a lot of hell, too.

Ward: Well, now, the Teamster negotiations; how long did this minuet with the Teamsters continue?

LG: For several years; Nixon was still in office when the thing was called off. I recall Fitzsimmons was out here. I think that Fitzsimmons might have

LG: continued serving on the Nixon Wage Stabilization Board, do you recall that? There was this pay board established right in the middle of the longshore strike in 1971. Part of the wage increase that we had won was not okayed by the pay board even after a big presentation back there by Harry and others who went back. It was turned down.

I know that at this meeting it was quite apparent that whatever discussions had taken place were not going to get much further. Later on I found out that there were a lot of wheels within wheels going on; one of which I thought we had effectively answered. Let me give you an example: under the Teamster constitution all locals in an area belong to the Joint Council.

There had been a steady, on-going battle in the Teamsters Union in the Seattle area on the question of leadership. How much policy was involved, I don't know, but this battle had been going on for a long, long time. One feedback that I finally picked up -

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Problems With The IBT Constitution

Ward: You learned something about Fitzsimmons, you were saying.

LG: He was getting a lot of flack from the northwest. We have a lot of small locals up there; you have ports, let us say, that are 30 to 40 miles apart, a local in Bellingham, a local in Everett, a local in Port Angeles and other locals around Seattle, Olympia, another one in Tacoma, another one in Raymond, another one in Aberdeen. I gather that under the Teamster constitution each local is entitled to five delegates -

Ward: No matter what the size?

LG: That's right, to their Joint Council, and some people up there decided that it could be bad business for them to admit us because they weren't sure how our people would vote; this would be the admittance of a large block of votes which made them a bit unhappy.

Ward: It might upset somebody?

LG: Upset the apple cart. I recall one conversation with Fitzsimmons, or whomever I was talking to where I said, "We can resolve that one; in the case of small locals, you could have five locals combine or three locals combine to elect their five delegates."

In fact, I didn't think it was of any importance because our reaction is always the more the merrier; the larger participation you can get, the better it is; the more you can broaden the educational forum, whether it be a Joint Council or a Labor Council, no harm done at all.

This was bothering them, but I figured it was a rather minor thing. That apparently was one of the elements; a number of people were needling Fitzsimmons. The Teamster constitution leaves a lot to be desired.

The Teamster set-up is something that's worth a lot more study than people have given it. In many respects I think it might be one of the most characteristic of all American unions. Here's what I mean about "characteristic"; it reflects the peculiar dichotomy within our sociological structure, the idea that big is good; a conviction on the part of a great many workers that if you're going to match employer strength these days you have to have large and powerful organizations, and at the same time a lot of local autonomy.

Ward: Well, I gather it's a sort of a mesh, a democratic facade in a functional benevolent dictatorship; the typical American trade union constitution.

LG: I don't think it's a functional dictatorship; I think people are wrong in their appraisal of that. I'll admit that you can run into all kinds of problems which are a by-product of the anarcho-syndicalism that is ingrained in the American labor movement.

In other words, it's not confined to one individual. It's a reflection of anarcho-syndicalism, together with a sort of fierce independence that you still get on the part of the average American

LG: worker; on that score he's a much more independent character than his counterparts in Europe. I've never thought that the American working class is nearly as docile as the British.

Ward: I wouldn't call the French and Italian workers docile, from my personal experience.

LG: Well, I'm just making a comparison with the British; the Germans, too, not from personal contact but from reading and talking to people. Without an understanding of some of this, then it's hard to realize what can be done in a situation.

How Not To Conduct A Strike

LG: Look, the bay area right now has been going through this long, drawn-out grocery warehouse strike. There's a long background to that, which reflects some of the peculiarities of the Teamsters Union. It's a business of understanding them and learning to live with them.

At one time we had a number of the grocery warehouses; most of them have folded up or gone out of business, like Purity and Associated Foods. Some of them have moved out from under us - Safeway did, although we still have a Safeway warehouse up in Sacramento, and they are out in support of the Teamsters, as well as a couple of other Safeway plants. United Grocers decided to get out from under our union by moving to Richmond and they made a deal with the Teamsters.

A few years later, the guy from United came to me and said, "You know, my company is really getting worked over now by the Teamsters. We sure would like your help." I said, "You're talking about United Grocers, aren't you?" He said, "Yes," and I said, "No matter what the Teamsters ask, it's not enough. You double-crossed us; you made your bed and you can sleep in it."

Something else happens in that situation. The kind of discipline and unity and adhesion that you get under a master contract is taken apart when you get fragmentation. In some of the discussions I

LG: was having with Teamsters, they had headaches with the grocery warehouses. Why? Because they had become a free-wheeling outfit - they were not thinking in terms of how you do the most for everybody involved, including all warehousemen, but how do you do the most for me.

Safeway was tabbed as an outfit that would never take a beef; they always paid before they took a beef, the reason for that being that in the case of a grocery warehouse you are not servicing the whole public trade; you are not selling to the general public.

I think the Teamsters made good gains, but to have gone blindly onward, year after year, figuring there would be no point at which the employers wouldn't try to recoup, was a terrible mistake. And then, the peculiar autonomy of the locals can take on funny turns. You suddenly find attempts to build rank and file negotiating committees and everything else overnight. It doesn't happen in one fell swoop.

Jim McLaughlin is with the Retail Clerks, and I asked him, "Gee, what's going to be the relationship between you and the Food and Drug Council?" The Food and Drug Council is an organization made up of Retail Clerks, Teamsters, Butchers; we belong to it in Southern California; I think we attend some of the sessions here. I said, "What effect is this going to have since the clerks went back to work?"

I know it was a mistake for the Teamsters to picket the retail outlets almost immediately after going on strike; again, it's bad strike leadership. If you're going to spread a strike you first put in your own muscle and all your energies for a period of thirty days, at least.

It's only when you've gotten everything into the strike and when you can convince other workers and other unions that the employers are not going to settle on reasonable terms, or that they are determined to break the union, then you start asking for support. During the interim period you pound away on the issues of the strike, so that you have some real basic grass roots support before you ask others to pull out. I was asking Jim what was going to happen now that the Retail Clerks voted to go back to work -

Ward: They went back?

LG: Yes, they went back a month ago. He said, "Well, our relations with the Teamsters are still good. I don't know whether you know this, but things have gotten pretty hopeless there." "What do you mean?" I said. "Well, in their negotiations they started to have rank and file committees, but - you go to one meeting and here's a committee, say, of five representing the membership; then at the next meeting they are no longer there. They bring on a new committee of five."

This is not really a rank and file committee. It more closely resembles undisciplined anarchy; you can't win a strike that way, without discipline; now the thing is riding rough.

Ward: It looks bad.

LG: These are by-products of the situation I was mentioning in terms of the Teamster structure and constitution.

Ward: I'd like to end up the Teamster thing; what happened to break off the negotiations? What can you tell me about it so that we can conclude the Teamster . . .?

LG: I'd say that the negotiations quietly collapsed, really. In other words, they ground to a halt with Fitzsimmons taking the position, "Well, we still have our general constitution and we can't go around changing it." I know there were some people in the Teamsters who felt very keenly that he had either lost patience or was yielding to some of the pressures he was getting. We did not press the thing; I know I didn't, particularly.

Ward: Would it be fair to say that the Teamsters felt they had two million members and the ILWU was a tiny little thing, comparatively speaking, and who the hell were you to tell them what to do about their constitution?

LG: There was an element of that, but not as much as you put it. For example, it was a very minor element in Hoffa's thinking. Sure, he was proud of numbers; two million members are a lot of members, and it's a pretty effective piece of machinery if you can get it all together. Sometimes it's together and sometimes it isn't together - sometimes it goes its own way.

Ward: Well, that does it for now - what are we going to take up next time? Newspaper Guild?

LG: Oh, we can take up the Newspaper Guild, but I think what I'll do is go over some of these developments in the sixties. I think it began to drive home that things were not exactly the same . . . .

Ward: Oh, yes. In other words, the boiling point had been reached.

LG: It wasn't a boiling point - it was a cooling point.

XXVIII EVENTS OF THE SIXTIES

(Interview 34: 16 November, 1978)

An Historical Period

Ward: Okay, Lou, you wanted to discuss certain events in the sixties having to do with what you call "the turning point."

LG: Why don't I just give you some of the highlights of the sixties, which was an historical period insofar as it impinged on us as to national affairs, international affairs, and local matters.

Ward: I think of Vietnam and student uprisings.

LG: There were the student uprisings, the enormous push on civil liberties; there was the Vietnam War.

Ward: We became painfully aware, just about then.

LG: That's right; we were actually involved in the thing earlier. As Eisenhower pointed out in his own papers, the U.S. didn't permit the election to go ahead on the reunification of North and South Vietnam because we felt the United States would lose it. You had civil rights, the movement of the students and the Vietnam War, all of which dovetailed, overlapped, and enfolded one another. I say the greatest culmination of the sixties took place in France, not here, and that was in 1968 where it was the student movement that triggered the general strike.

LG: I mentioned those three elements. There were also some things that developed that were more specific to the west coast, and particularly California. One was the big farm worker movement; it was the period during which the farm workers organizing drive really began to take shape. The boycott of grapes was initiated during 1965 or thereabouts, picket lines to stop the shipment of grapes around the docks and warehouses.

During that same period, I helped launch the California Council for Health Plan Alternatives in conjunction with the Teamsters Union; later expanded so that most of the AFL-CIO unions began to participate.

I mention each of these things because there was a definite drifting apart within the union. I'm not sure it was all ideological; some were just personal reactions to the people who were involved in some of these movements. A feeling which I knew was very strong in Harry was that you might latch up with other groups at various times, as we had with the American Committee for the Protection of the Foreign Born; but at the same time we had a very strong feeling that the number one base of the ILWU was the unions, and that in many cases there should be no movement at all unless we could get other unions to go along.

Lessened ILWU Activity

LG: This could also become a position which results in no movement. My feeling was that if the ILWU felt keenly about something, we should go ahead and do it; if others come along, they'll come along. After all, it was not too uncommon for us, from the initial days of the organization, to strike out on our own and launch all kinds of things; dive into certain issues even though other unions were a bit slow.

This was true on everything from our standing policy of fighting on things like redbaiting, racial discrimination, the organization of Hawaii,

LG: the agricultural workers, to the formation of steward systems. I felt very much identified with a lot of these things. You or others might have gotten the impression that there was a continuous running battle inside the organization; that was not true, really.

Ward: Not at that time, anyway.

LG: No; oh, I'll concede that come 1970 other things began to happen that directly affected the internal structure of the union and had its impact, I suppose, on the allegiance of workers.

Ward: Some members say that it reached the point of a complete stalemate; the union couldn't do anything because of the divergent ideas; when one man said, "Yes" the other man automatically said, "No".

LG: That would not mean that the union couldn't do anything. It might mean that you did some things under much greater difficulties; that somebody else was stepping on your heels or making life a little bit on the complicated side, but it didn't stop you from doing anything. Even when things got pretty exacerbated I never felt that it stopped the union from going ahead.

It might have acted as a deterrent on the part of a number of people becoming more active. I think one of the by-products was a tendency to discourage the kind of things that are so essential to the life of the union, such as broad collective leadership, the frequent calling of meetings of secondary leadership and rank and filers to hammer things out. A continuous discussion of opinion was always one of the characteristics of the union, and it did a great deal to promote its growth. That might have been seriously dampened.

One feature of the union which obviously was neglected was the constant effort to develop and build new leadership. Bear in mind, the sixties also saw the passing of some of the old guard. This didn't limit itself to staff; Morris Watson retired; Linc Fairley got quite ill during the sixties and luckily had an assistant, Barry Silverman, who began to function and before long took

LG: over. People like Henry Schmidt and Jerry Bulcke retired during that period. There was a changing of the guard. Bob Robertson retired in 1969, and there were some developments in that regard which created some pretty hard feelings, particularly following the 1965 convention in Canada. So, these things caused injury because anybody could see that the searching for new members and new leadership would become a high priority. All you can do is speculate as to whether this caused a feeling that nothing new was to happen after Harry.

Ward: It's the sort of situation where the old guard doesn't see any need for new blood; that's frequently the case.

LG: Right. One of these days somebody has to do a study on the geriatrics of leadership and the geriatrics of institutions. There's no way of short-changing anybody like Harry. His contributions were enormous. The kind of battle he put up, not only for organization in '34, but also against the attempts to deport him; the things he did in terms of the rights of resident aliens, amount to a chapter in the history of this country that can't be lost.

Ward: Well, his brave stance was not only helpful to him, but the union, too; it made the members fight for citizenship rights and to have this alien or whomever they wanted for their leader.

LG: Correct. An interesting aspect of that was that one of the things that developed under the Kennedy-Landrum-Griffin bill was the attempt to enforce a provision that anybody who had been a member of the Communist party in the previous five years could not hold any official position in the union.

Well, we had a known member of the Communist party who was a member of one of the committees in the Longshore Division, Archie Brown; he never made a secret of his membership. He ran for the publicity committee and was elected. The government filed action against him; there are certain criminal penalties. The union decided we would take on that section of Landrum-Griffin; eventually we had that section nullified, I think by an appellate court.

LG: I think the Supreme Court denied certiorari. Well, we fought that issue through; certain issues retained a basic consistency with the union.

On the other hand, the refusal to participate in some of these other developments meant that there was a certain pulling in; in other words, a tendency to live in a smaller and smaller shell. Later on, of course, it was put in another way, particularly during that period when Harry was pushing very hard for affiliation with the ILA. It was around the principle that the union was going nowhere, wasn't growing, and that the time had come to merge.

I felt that this was a self-fulfilling prophecy. To say that it nullified the activity of the union, I think is incorrect. Where I think it did its basic harm was in the tendency toward a policy that was practically ingrown instead of constantly branching out, of constantly identifying with the underdog, of constantly seeing within such movements the important aspects of their cause. These things were gradually being hindered or nullified.

Yet, during that same period, in a few specific situations the union showed up in excellent colors. There was a huge civil rights march in San Francisco, one of the biggest, around 1964 or 1965, with the ILWU doing a great deal in the preparation of the march up Market Street and the meeting which took place at the Civic Center. I recall spending a great deal of time and the union putting a good deal of energy and some money into that.

I recall the parades in Selma, Alabama, and the big civil rights movement. There were beatings at the bridge in Selma; the bombing of that church where the little girls were killed. I remember at that time pressing, and we finally called a stop-work meeting at noon time with longshoremen, ship clerks and warehousemen coming off the job and getting a number of other trade unionists there at the federal building. We jammed the whole street; they had to block it off.

So, it isn't as though we didn't respond to these things, yet it was a response of only a certain form. On the other hand, when there were

LG: sit-ins at the Palace Hotel and the automobile dealers, the tendency was to walk away from it. Harry, for example, became terribly suspicious of a guy like Matt Burbridge -

Ward: Who?

LG: Matt Burbridge - he was the head of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People); he was a scientist who worked, I think, at the University of California laboratories. I believe he was a Ph.D. (Doctor of Philosophy) He did a lot of work on the study of sharks.

But he became very involved in the civil rights movement. He was a man who had personal difficulties, no question about that. I saw quite a bit of him, just to see where the devil we could give them a hand.

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Ward: You were going back from the NAACP man to other issues at that time.

LG: Okay, I'll mention a couple of highlights. There was the Free Speech Movement in '64. My immediate reaction to it was "wonderful". I had given it a whirl back in the thirties with only limited success. History comes around and meets you once in a while. When I went to Cal, we had these meetings at Sather Gate. Sather Gate then was outside the campus.

Ward: You left your footprints there on the balustrade, didn't you?

LG: I don't know if we wore it down that much, but we spent a good deal of time standing there, right. Some years later, Clark Kerr was head of the university when the student demonstrations took place.

Ward: Yes, I know that very well.

LG: Whether that broke his back or not, I don't know.

Ward: He didn't last long after that -

Tackling High Medical Costs

LG: No, but he was still there when we formed the Council for Health Plan Alternatives, which was formed somewhere around '65 or '66. Einar Mohn was chairman of that. I was secretary. Later on it was helped by fairly good financial contributions matched equally between the Auto Workers and the Teamsters Union. Other unions contributed some money; we contributed a nominal amount. I think it was something like $3600 a year. For some reason or other, Harry was completely jaundiced about the thing; he would have no part of it.

One of the things the Council did was to set up a meeting with Clark Kerr. The idea was to see what could be done by the unions, who were the single biggest purchasers of health care in the state. When you take the union members and their families the amount of money which we funnel into the health care structure comes by far from the largest organized group which has some influence to bring to bear. How could we do something to make sure that there was good medical care, and to do something about the escalation of costs.

One thing that was apparent to us who had done some study on the thing was that we had become collection agencies for the hospitals and doctors. On that score we were better than any collection agency that ever came along.

As soon as the contract was negotiated - and most contracts were for two or three years - most unions forgot all about health and welfare until the contract ran out. Then they would talk with their so-called consultants, 95 percent of them being insurance companies or plans like Blue Cross, which are the same thing, really.

Their consultants or brokers would tell the unions the costs and say, "We're awfully sorry, but the costs will be that much more." Well, the one thing the unions could not take was a revolt

LG: of the membership by cutting benefits, so the next thing was to put the hammer on the employer and collect the additional fees; they became a collection agency.

What could be done to stop this escalation? We were very much in support of the Federal government idea that came along during that period, or a little bit later, called HMO - Health Maintenance Organization; Kaiser is a part of that. Mohn finally got around to realizing that perhaps only something like Kaiser, or the plan of Dr. (Russel Van Arsdale) Lee down the peninsula - the Palo Alto Clinic - were the only things that made any sense and gave some sort of control on this monster.

There is literally no end to the appetite of the doctors or the hospitals. I'm not talking now about bad doctors, but there wasn't any necessary relationship between how much money was being put out and what kind of medical care people were getting.

Before long we had all kinds of people, like Milt Rohmer from UCLA, Arthur Carstens from down there, Lester Breslow, who was head of the Department of Public Health for a while in California, all very good people; they participated and we had a tremendous amount of assistance; people prepared to do all kinds of studies. We had a series of meetings with some of the medical societies.

One of the plans we launched through the ILWU was the San Joaquin Medical Plan, and that was done because the doctors around Stockton were convinced that if they didn't move into some sort of prepayment plan, Kaiser was going to move in.

We told them point-blank, "Sure, and if Kaiser moves in there, we'll be urging all our people to join Kaiser because we have no control over you guys." They sat down and put together a plan. Goldie Krantz was very influential in that; she was head of our health and welfare department at the time; the plan amounted to paying through the medical society - they set up an association there. I think all the doctors in that area, except some five or six, became participants. They were paid so much a member and they disciplined themselves.

LG: In other words, it wasn't as though the thing couldn't be done. If enough economic pressure was put on, it could be accomplished. We met with a whole series of these medical societies, trying to encourage them to do the same thing, with only moderate success.

We also needed certain technical help with the idea and somebody said, "Look, you have the University of California at Davis, practically a branch of the farming industry in California. They do all kinds of research for the farmers. The University of California ought to be doing the kind of research that we want." People like Don Vial at Cal, Bruce Poyer, were very active with the Council for Health Plan Alternatives.

So we set up a meeting with Clark Kerr; I recall Einar Mohn and several others from the Council and myself went over and talked to him; George Johns of the San Francisco Labor Temple was along. We put forward what we wanted and told them that certain research ought to be made available to us, the same as those that help the farmers through the University of California at Davis, and we thought the trade unions were entitled to the same help.

Well, he was a bit vague but generally implied that he would look into the thing and perhaps help out a bit. We got a little bit of help, but not a great deal. I had a feeling that Mohn wasn't too happy with the reaction he was getting from Clark Kerr; he felt he should get a more positive response, with people specifically assigned right then and there, certain commitments made.

Toward the tail end of the meeting Clark Kerr decided to try to give the session a little more levity; he turned to the group and said, "I want to tell you about the first time I met Lou here. I was studying at Stanford and I had a friend at the International House (in Berkeley). I was visiting him and he asked whether I would like to go down and hear some of the rebels on campus. So we went down there and that's the first time I heard Lou speaking at Sather Gate."

LG: This meeting with Clark Kerr was after the student upheaval had taken place, part of which was won hands down, namely, the right to meet on campus, set up their card tables, the right to distribute literature. In the thirties, we couldn't even get a meeting place on campus - we met at the "Y" through Harry Kingman; if it hadn't been for him I don't know where we would have met. After Clark Kerr got through telling the story there was a bit of laughter about the whole thing.

Ward: He was an arbitrator in a lot of labor cases?

LG: Oh, sure. He had something to do with our beef at Pioneer Mill - he was down there as the arbitrator, I think designated by Nate Feinsinger.

So, as we were leaving the meeting, the whole group standing around, I said, "Well, Clark, at least there's been one change since the time you heard me." He said, "What's that?" "They're doing the speaking on campus now." (laughter)

The Free Speech Movement

LG: But back to the campus beef. Two of my daughters were at Cal then: my daughter, Ann; her husband was also doing graduate work in marine biology. Eventually, the idea was to try to find something that would be a substitute for all these toxic poisons used in farming; something that would arrest the generative process of insects.

Ward: Make them infertile?

LG: Right. Well, it made a lot more sense than DDT; he was a very good scholar. Ann was there, and my daughter Lee was there. She had gone to Oberlin for two years and then decided she didn't like that and wanted to come back to the west coast and to Cal. Lee was very involved in the whole free speech movement; she was one of those who took part in the sit-in at Sproul Hall.

Ward: She got down to Santa Rita, (the Alameda County prison farm), then?

LG: So, she wound up at Santa Rita. As a matter of fact when I heard she was in Santa Rita, I called a friend of mine, a bail bondsman and a union guy. I said, "I guess you will be handling some of this", and he said, "Sure." So, I said, "Well, make sure that you don't let my daughter sit there indefinitely."

I think she was one of the first ones out. I'm not sure she was too happy about that, either; after all, there's such a thing as solidarity that you have with the other kids at a time like that. But she was very active in the whole thing and working her head off.

I decided this was something I was definitely interested in, wanted to see if we could do something about it. It's true, they wanted some ILWU speakers there. As a matter of fact there were some union guys who did speak there, George Hardy and Dick Groulx from the Alameda Council spoke there.

When I mentioned that to Harry, he said, "Aw well, George has a hard-on for the university because he can't organize its workers and get a contract." But the fact that Hardy spoke there, I thought, was a damn good thing. We did not get the kind of union participation we wanted but we got some of it through our people in the ILWU. You recall those hearings before the Berkeley City Council? They had to do with ordinances and the question of free speech. Bill Burke appeared from Local 6 - a good, solid guy, one of the business agents.

What was obvious to me was that the university couldn't take this position of no tables on campus, no meetings on campus, no literature on campus. That one was lost by the university. The only important thing was the attempt of the university to exercise reprisals against some of the kids who had taken leadership. The university was prepared to concede all these things, except there were four people whose scalps they wanted, as I recall - Mario Savio,

Ward: Dolph Weintraub . . . .

LG: And a guy named Art Goldberg - there four of them all together. Anyway, after some looking around and making inquiries I talked to the head of the U. C. Labor Relations Institute at the time. I talked to him, and while he was generally sympathetic, he didn't do too much about it.

Then, I ran down an individual who held one of the top posts with the university structure. Trying to get to Kerr was just about impossible; by that time he was caught in the crossfire - the students on one side, and all the reactionaries screaming at him, "Get those animals back in the cage." I bumped into Wayne Horvitz, who had worked for Matson; he was their labor relations man. He was a curious guy; he's now head of the Federal Conciliation and Mediation Service.

I always liked Wayne. His dad had been a labor arbitrator. I guess he felt that should have been his field, but he wound up instead in personnel work. He dealt with the Mine Mill and Smelter Workers Union or UE somewhere in the east. American Cable Company - that was it. I'd met him a number of times, particularly around the mechanization program.

He was pretty much a straight labor relations guy. He thought a lot of St. Sure. St. Sure did a thorough job representing his people, and pretty much the same thing could be said about Wayne Horvitz. Wayne tried to separate that from his personal beliefs; to what degree he succeeded, I don't know.

I think he felt that it was important to get the university back on its feet and give the youngsters what they were fighting for. I felt that the demonstrations they had were mighty effective. I used to go over and attend them; at least walk around, see their picket lines. I thought the most effective thing they did was using these big IBM (International Business Machines) cards for picket signs; the names on them; the Free Speech Movement.

We had a number of sessions with this chap, trying to get the thing worked out, but the one thing he couldn't handle was just clear reinstatement; in other words, no retribution.

Ward: That didn't happen?

LG: No, the situation reached a deadlock; there was a half-assed arrangement, finally. They went back there on some sort of an odd settlement . . . .

Ward: Savio didn't get back for a year or two.

LG: Yes; the holidays came along; then they started up all over again; it went on and on. That's where the university made a terrible mistake, because the longer it went on, the more it was clear that the university was yielding to the pressure of these reactionary forces; they had to have some heads, like that of John the Baptist.

Ward: I was told that Harry refused to speak. There was one hell of a mass meeting at night in the spot where the Zellerbach Auditorium now stands. It was some old athletic practice field at that time. Izzy Stone (I.F. Stone, famous leftwing writer) was one of the speakers, if not the main speaker. I was told Harry was invited and he refused because Paul Jacobs (an anti-Bridges activist) was also invited.

LG: That could be - I don't know. I know Paul Jacobs was mixed up in the thing; something that wouldn't make me happy. I didn't think much of Paul Jacobs; he's just a self-appointed fink.

Ward: Paul Jacobs wouldn't be the issue, I would say.

LG: No; but I hung in there with the beef and did whatever I could. Wayne helped out a bit.

Protests v. The Vietnam War

LG: Finally, it worked itself out, but that ran into the Vietnam battles in 1965. You might remember the famous teach-in there. As a matter of fact, as far as Berkeley and the students were concerned, Harry used to make the remark, "Okay, we'll support them - we're not going to take any ships into the port of Berkeley." Because there are no docks there!

Ward: He never heard of Ocean View.

LG: No.

Ward: That was the first wharf in San Francisco Bay; it was at Berkeley.

LG: I don't know, Harry might have thought the thing was humorous. I doubt that the students thought so. I know I didn't think so. I wasn't too happy that the union wasn't doing what it could do; I felt it was a good beef. I've always felt that alliances with other parts of society are so essential, as a trade union and in terms of moving ahead some of the wheels of progress.

To just draw into a little shell and be completely isolated and keep declaring that the working class is going to lead all changes, with everybody sitting around there waiting for the signal, that's not going to work. What will work is identifying with these other groups; then, in case of crisis, whether it be a trade union crisis or a social crisis, the allies are around; something we've always recognized. During real times of crisis you make an effort to reach people.

Oh, there might have been some differences of opinion; just a lone effort on my part. Whether this nettled Harry, I don't know. Of course, I don't want to underestimate how difficult I can be. I can be very, very stubborn; when I feel something is important and I'm determined to do it, I'll sometimes break my neck doing it.

Ward: You said your mother was like that, too.

LG: She was very similar, yes - so was my dad. I would not back away. That might have had some repercussions that didn't manifest themselves at the time.

In '65 the ILWU convention took place in Canada; Vietnam was beginning to peak. By that time, the Tonkin Gulf resolution had been passed; two people had voted against it: (Senators Ernest) Gruening and Morse. We invited Gruening to our convention. Morse had spoken a number of times before us.

Ward: Gruening was from Alaska, wasn't he?

LG: From Alaska, with a fascinating history, you know. I think he was an M.D.; he had been the territorial governor of Puerto Rico, for a while. I believe at one time he edited the New Masses (a Marxist magazine).

Ward: I didn't know that.

LG: Yes, interesting; this guy was no youngster. He was well into his late seventies. I recall him arriving because it was fairly late at night, around 11:30 or 12:00. I didn't think it was right for him to just arrive and have some of our local men looking after him; I went out to the airport to meet him, came back to the hotel, and we went up to his room.

I asked him, "Do you want something to eat or something?" He said, "No, no, I had some food on the plane; how about a drink?" I said, "I think the bars are closed by now, I'm sorry, Senator." He said, "Oh, that's no problem." He carried a small brief case with a couple of bottles. He pulls out a bottle and wants to know about the convention, about the delegates. I told him as much as I could.

He was particularly interested in who was down from Alaska. It wasn't too long before I said, "Look, I've got to be on deck first thing, you're due to speak early in the morning, too." So, we finally called it an evening.

Gruening made an excellent presentation. He was a very thorough man - he had quite a volume of stuff, a lot of documentation on Vietnam and its background. After that we took up and adopted a resolution that has stood us in good stead. It was the first resolution I know of adopted by any union calling for getting out of Vietnam, calling for a cease-fire and letting the people settle things themselves.

Ward: What position did Harry take on it?

LG: Harry's position was in favor of the resolution. He thought that a lot of the introductory stuff was unnecessary, but he supported the brief resolveds at the end: "Stop the killing, cease fire, get out of Vietnam; let the people settle it themselves."

LG: Of course, that left many unanswered questions, like "Do they get elections? Will they ever have elections?"

At least it was the correct thing to do at that particular stage of the game; a position not too unlike the one for settling Korea, which we didn't win at first but eventually became the position which was adopted. I won't say that the convention was unanimous on the Vietnam resolution. By the time it hit the floor, a lot of the objections had been answered. The general reaction was not too bad, but a number of our members felt very keenly, "Look, the country's at war, what the hell can you do about it? You stick with it, do your share."

It was later on that some of our guys began to be much more outspoken on the Vietnam question; wonderful guys like Paul Keady. He was a fine longshoreman from Newport, Oregon; one of these fellows who wears suspenders and a belt; typical northwesterner; he had worked in the woods, gone to sea, then into longshoring.

He made a very dramatic speech at a caucus or a convention, where he took responsibility for the fact that his kids had gone to war. They had asked him what did he think; should they go when they were drafted, or shouldn't they? He said, "I was a coward for telling them to do whatever they thought was right; I should have told them, "Don't go."

So, the guys began to come around. Well, later on that year, still 1965, they had the Vietnam teach-ins over at Cal. Remember, they went on for about a week; some of them went all day and some of them went late into the night. Gruening came there as a speaker. We were invited to introduce Gruening; I talked to Harry, as to whether he wanted to do it. He was very much opposed, and he was also opposed to me doing it.

I saw no reason why I shouldn't; after all we had had Gruening at our convention. The only way I can figure that one out is that it was part of his feeling about the students; he was just not friendly.

Ward: You did introduce Greuning, didn't you?

LG: Yes. Anyway, well, that's just one of those things I can't figure out. In 1968 there was a trade union conference in St. Louis. Hal Gibbons was part of that meeting; as a matter of fact, it was held at his union headquarters. Emil Mazey (of the Auto Workers) was chairman. A number of the unions were there; Jerry Wurf of the State, County and Municipal Workers; and the UE was there, (James) Matles and (Albert J.) Fitzgerald.

We had a pretty fair representation from the ILWU. What was the name of this woman, I think from Detroit or Chicago - Myra Wolfgang - Hotel and Restaurant Workers, a good progressive person; she was around. Leon Davis and Moe Foner were there from the Hospital Workers, so the representation was good. Harry was at that meeting. By and large it was a good session, yet his reaction to the students was absolutely negative.

Of course, student movements are not the easiest thing to work with, because they don't have durability. After all, the student movement is built around the life span of the student's time at school, so that it is a constantly changing situation; it doesn't take the same form as any kind of stable organization. It can also be that there was a feeling that when students get rolling, they move in many directions at the same time . . . .

Ward: They're liable to go to extremes?

LG: A lot of it is very tangential. But that's the nature of student movements; just because they're students doesn't mean that suddenly they are outcasts from society or hermits. Neither one is true, and for a union or anyone to be part of a process of isolating them, putting them in educational test tubes . . . . .

Ward: That seems a little odd, Harry's attitude; I recall very vividly he had no hesitation whatever coming over to the academic world in Berkeley to progressive people's homes during the late thirties, particularly in regard to Spain. I know that when a progressive Berkeley hostess was going to give a cause party, if she could get (Dr. Robert) Oppenheimer that was good; if she could get Bridges

Ward: that was big; but if she could get both of them, she had the world by the tail.

LG: Yes. He'd speak at these things. I remember him speaking at San Francisco State (University) when he was in a running battle with (Dr. Fred) Schwartz of the Christian anti-Communist crusade; this Australian who made quite a profession of redbaiting. I remember Harry speaking at State. I remember also, there was a debate with Schwartz at the Fairmont Hotel.

There you got a good picture of Harry and how he handles himself in these debates. The guy has a lot of individual courage, you know; no hesitation to go after the other guy's jugular or gonads, and quick.

Ward: He was better in a fight than just making a set speech.

LG: As a matter of fact, I remember him speaking to a Local 6 meeting, a big meeting in the Civic Auditorium. Somebody sitting on the platform said, "Jesus Christ, Harry doesn't seem to be awfully interested in the meeting," until some guy got up and made some crack attacking Harry. All of a sudden he really heated up; then he took off with all engines. He had that real fighter's instinct, no question about that. Don't underestimate his capabilities.

Ward: Well, was there any retribution on Harry's part when you went ahead and introduced Gruening?

LG: What do you mean by "retribution?"

Ward: Well, I mean afterwards did he show resentment?

LG: Oh, sure, he wasn't happy about it. More and more he got a feeling of "This guy (me) is going to do what he thinks he ought to do" . . . .

Ward: "Whether I like it or not".

LG: That could be true. I'm not the easiest person in the world, either. Those might have been contributing factors in building up friction.

Supporting The Farm Workers

LG: The Farm Worker thing was somewhere around that period. I think it was in 1966; it was the year that (Governor) Pat Brown ran for a third term against (Ronald) Reagan and was defeated. It was in '66, at the time of the Easter recess; for some reason or other Harry got the idea that the whole purpose of the Farm Workers' demonstration was to embarrass Pat Brown.

Ward: Oh, yes, that was the Easter Sunday thing.

LG: Well, nothing could have been further from the truth. I mean, these guys had been on this long peregrination as they call it; a march which started somewhere around Delano -

Ward: All the way up the (San Joaquin) Valley . . . .

LG: All the way up the valley. I don't know how many weeks they had been on the road, getting a little help in some places, hooting and booing in other places. It was a real mobilization for the Farm Workers, a pretty dramatic thing.

Ward: Catholic bishops along and a cross or two, and all that sort of thing.

LG: And they had the Lady of Guadalupe; I'll admit, it puzzled me.

Ward: That would have bothered Harry.

LG: Well, I don't see how it could have bothered Harry more than it bothered me.

Ward: Well, the only time he was in Rome- I think the only time - he scandalized the Italian comrades because he wouldn't go to St. Peters.

LG: Yes. Well, I went to St. Peters as a matter of historical interest, that's all, just as I went to the Sistine Chapel. I did not go to the Sistine Chapel because the cardinals met there. I went to the Sistine Chapel to see the paintings.

Ward: Wasn't that a little too much for you?

LG: No - because of the murals there - Michelangelo, that was the important thing.

Ward: I broke my neck, too, at the Sistine Chapel.

LG: But I do recall there was a longshore caucus in town. I'd been asked to speak at the rally in Sacramento and I told them I would; after all, our basic policy was in support of the Farm Workers.

Sure there are all kinds of funny currents in the Farm Workers. You had the AFofL-CIO with some organizational set-up. I don't know whether the Teamsters were directly involved; I think they were indirectly. Fundamentally, Cesar Chavez and the Farm Workers had done the job; they had gotten it off the ground. Up until that time all kinds of people had tried but they hadn't succeeded.

As a matter of fact, we had tried. I think I told you that we had a man named Lou Krainack in the field for a while, but there was just no way of moving it. I felt very keenly that we should have been neck deep in the farm workers; we'd had a lot of experience, primarily through our work in Hawaii. While the farms in California are not identical, there are a lot of large farms here.

I thought that some of our Filipino leaders in Hawaii would do an awfully good job with the farm workers here, particularly the Filipinos. As a matter of fact, the Filipinos were one of the first allies of Cesar Chavez; people like Larry Itliong.

Bear in mind, too, that a number of these Filipino farm workers were also Alaska Cannery Workers, and when the cannery season came along, they took off and went up to work the fish. The balance of the year, they would live around Stockton and many of them would work in the fields. Almost the entire asparagus crop was cut by Filipinos.

Ward: Well, so this Easter Sunday arrival in Sacramento . .?

LG: Anyway, there was a longshore caucus in San Francisco. I guess it was lunch time and Harry walked out all of a sudden with me. He said, "I understand

LG: you're going up to the Farm Workers." And I said, "Yeah, they've invited me." "Well, you shouldn't do it; I'm going to take it up here at the caucus." I said, "Well, I'll stick around." I stuck around there that afternoon, but he didn't take it up.

So, I took off and went up there and it was a good rally. What I did was simply tell them the position of the union, the same thing that I did in the case of Gruening; I read the ILWU resolution there, and that had quite an impact. We were the first union in the country that had come out and said something about the Vietnam War other than "kill 'em all."

I was able to hammer away about this pounding that the newspapers had been doing on the organization of the farm workers, claiming it was an impossible thing because of the seasonality of the crops. I said, "That is just an enormous lie." I mentioned the Little Wagner Act that we had had passed in Hawaii, which gave us the right to have elections among farm workers. Sure, we hadn't used the thing a great deal, but we cracked through with it once and that was enough.

I said all this propaganda about the inability of this industry to be subject to union organization was a complete lie; I think that made a contribution to the meeting. Eventually they did get a California agricultural representation act, like the Wagner Act. This was a field in which I thought we should be interested.

As a matter of fact, in the period after that, in the course of discussion more and more of this business came up that the union wasn't getting any place and it was time to be merged. I kept arguing that one of the reasons that we didn't develop new leadership and were not going any place is that we didn't get mixed up in enough things. There was much feeling in support of the Farm Workers within our own union.

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Ward: You were saying, Lou, that there would be no trouble getting through an assessment on behalf of the Farm Workers.

LG: Yes, we could get something like a sustaining fund of 50 cents a month. We didn't have a lot of dough in the ILWU, but with that we could have supported a group of organizers to go out in the fields and give the farm workers a hand.

Ward: In other words, the cause of the farm workers was popular with the membership of the ILWU.

LG: No question about that; obviously very popular with the guys in Hawaii because of the common ties there with the sugar and pineapple workers. It would be popular with groups like the longshoremen in Los Angeles, because you have a large percentage of Mexican-Americans there; help would have been forthcoming.

Ward: Did you make such a proposition to Harry?

LG: Sure, but he was just not interested. Later on, his attitude was that we were not going to get mixed up in a beef between the United Farm Workers and the Teamsters; after that, at a later date, the Teamsters did enter the field.

Ward: That was when they organized Bud Antle's place, wasn't it?

LG: They had the Bud Antle place for many, many years. That was one of their claims to the organization of farm workers. The Bud Antle thing was an odd arrangement. It dated back . . . .

Ward: It was a sweetheart thing from start to finish?

LG: It dated back to the thirties; at one time the Teamsters had given Bud Antle national assistance. They had an agreement, and as to how fond the workers there were of that agreement, I don't know.

It was in Salinas, during the lettuce beef; the Teamsters were there in force and working very closely with some of the growers who said they were prepared to be unionized, but the one guy they

LG: would never deal with was Cesar Chavez; shades of what we had heard time and again! While I didn't feel we ought to get into an open breach with the Teamsters, on the other hand, I knew of all kinds of odd things that were happening. During that Salinas beef I recall talking with some of the Teamsters I had gotten to know through the Northern California Warehouse Council . . . .

Ward: And you had good relations with them?

LG: I had good relations with them and that included some of the men from around the valley; they, too, would take part in some of the council meetings and it didn't do them any harm; they had a number of warehouses; they were members from general locals, which also represented the drivers and packing sheds. Their general reaction was, in some cases, "Maybe we don't belong there, we're having trouble communicating with those people; they are not really home guards, they are moving around and you don't know where they'll be next week."

I think some of them figured it was more of a headache than it was worth; on a couple of occasions, people were saying why in the devil doesn't the ILWU step in there? My reaction was always the same; number one, we didn't have the wherewithall to do it; and secondly, I wasn't going to get into a beef with Cesar Chavez.

Sometimes walking that line was awfully rough; I would not back away from my support of Cesar, and I was not about to get into a death quarrel with the Teamsters over it, and I recall sessions we had with the Teamsters with Chavez present and the Auto Workers, with the general objective to set up some sort of a joint council to reconcile some of the jurisdictional problems the Teamsters were concerned about; their stake in places like packinghouse.

Unfortunately, the Farm Workers, and these are things that happen with new organizations and people who get angry, went around making cracks that if the Teamsters didn't lay off, they would move into the canneries. They had about as much chance as a snowball in hell, but the reason they thought they could do that, and the reason the Teamsters would take it as a serious threat, was that the canneries

LG: had acquired such a high proportion of Mexican-Americans. The obvious advantage of Cesar Chavez' troops was they could communicate with those people; the cannery workers in many cases were highly sympathetic with what the Farm Workers were doing.

So, it's too bad that there was not a close working alliance, or even affiliation, between the Farm Workers and the Teamsters. That was a natural nexus in terms of exercising all of the economic power you could muster to make those farmers meet and talk. After all, getting the stuff off the farm is one step; it has to be transported. In many cases, it has to go into a packing shed or a cannery, or as produce to the city; there it is handled by the produce workers, again, members of the Teamsters Union.

So, this whole circle of economic power lay around the farm workers, plus, of course, the other advantage that there was hardly an area where the Farm Workers were trying to get under way that did not already have Teamster locals. My hopes were that something could be worked out. I also felt very keenly that the ILWU could play a part and it would be a great thing for the labor movement.

With the wave of organization which had taken place one group of workers was never really touched, the group that goes all the way from farm workers to those working at minimum wages. They're still the big residue of unorganized workers in America, so that an effective organizational push around the farm workers would make an enormous difference in the life structure of the union movement.

I had the feeling that it would inject the kind of a spirit which every organization needs periodically. I thought that the farm worker organization, particularly with its enormous bloc of workers and the expanse they cover throughout California, because we're an agricultural state, would have been very worthwhile.

I recall this meeting where we tried to set up this liaison machinery. It was a friendly meeting; I was asked to give my reactions and I told them I thought that with the Auto Workers, the Teamsters

LG: and ILWU working together with the Farm Workers, it could be a group that would at least try to iron out some of these jurisdictional problems and see that organization goes ahead.

I said that as far as I was concerned the Farm Workers and Cesar were the ones who had done the sweating and the sacrificing and they had earned recognition. That didn't make everybody happy, but on the other hand, neither did it create a breach with the Teamsters. In '67 the Teamsters had announced openly that they were going after the farm workers, and had actually signed some contracts.

Some people came into one of our conventions with resolutions blasting the Teamsters, because the support for the Farm Workers was pretty high inside the ILWU. I felt that those resolutions ought to be tempered; I thought the time would come when the Teamsters would decide it wasn't worth it.

Actually that did happen; one of the turning points for the Farm Workers was the DiGiorgio (farm) election. I was able to play a role in that because I was talking to Einar Mohn and he knew that I was in touch with people like Cesar and his assistant, Dolores Huerta. Mohn said they were prepared to go for an election; he was getting pretty well fed up with the whole thing, anyway.

A lot of money was being spent; some of the people who were on the payroll, he thought, were complete incompetents. Almost any guy who could speak Spanish could get on the payroll, even though all of his Spanish speaking was to friends in the bar, and never to a guy in the field. Mohn did not like this sort of thing; if you were paid, you worked.

I was able to give a hand and to see to it that the election finally took place; the Farm Workers won, as I recall. Anyway, quite a bit later on, the Teamsters decided to get out of the field.

Ward: The public was turning pro-Farm Worker so strongly that the Teamsters felt it?

LG: That, and I think the Teamsters felt a lot of money was going down the drain for no good purpose. I don't think Mohn was all that concerned about the pressures; when the bishops committee that Cesar had working with him kept talking up, Mohn could be pretty blunt. He'd say, "Why don't you take care of their souls? We'll try to take care of the economic situation." Although he's a religious man - not a Catholic; a Lutheran, I'm pretty sure.

Ward: He's a Lutheran?

LG: I think so, yes. Lutherans generally are not that fond of Catholics, but Einar had certain characteristics I thought were good.

Ward: Anyway, the Teamster effort didn't work.

LG: Right. And I'll admit we had to walk a certain line. There were enough cool-headed guys in our union who, even though they felt very keenly about the Farm Workers and were contributing money all the time, gave me good support. We had a lot of guys who belonged to a $5 a month club they set up themselves; the Ship Clerks for example; Morris Watson's son, in particular, spent all his spare time helping the Farm Workers.

Anyway, it didn't result in a rupture between the ILWU and the Teamsters, although how Harry felt about these things, I'm not sure. His reactions to Cesar initially were very negative. Maybe they're better now, but then they were very negative.

Ward: He didn't like to be crossed. Isn't that the fact?

LG: Crossed by what?

Ward: Crossed in the union structure.

LG: Well, Harry didn't mind being opposed, if afterwards you said he was right and kissed his ring which he carried in his back pocket.

Ward: Well, let's see, we've covered events in the sixties. Is there anything left in those years that . . . .?

LG: Well, just let me give you another example about the Farm Workers. During the midst of the grape boycotts the arbitrator ruled against us, mainly

LG: that we could not observe the picket lines of the Farm Workers. Our guys would walk off every time they saw a Farm Worker picket line; they were all in support of the Farm Workers. But Arbitrator Kagel ruled that it was a secondary picket line. I guess technically he was correct. I don't think Sam's feelings were that much opposed to the Farm Workers, but he was going by what the contract read.

But apparently Harry had spoken to an attorney helping to represent the Farm Workers. I remember bumping into him at Original Joe's at lunch and he wanted to know if it was true that Harry was going to insist that the Farm Workers make good on any damage suits that might be filed against the ILWU for observing these picket lines.

I just shook my head. Frankly, I don't know if Harry just goosed him, or what. I told this guy that I hadn't heard about it. Why this feeling I don't know; maybe it was just something Cesar had said. He saw unionism pretty much in the same way we did, although it had all kinds of other overtones, some of which I found a bit uncomfortable, particularly the religious ones.

But they were using whatever forces were around; frankly not too different from us. I made the crack several times, "Well, okay, so he's working with the church." We always made the crack that we'd work with the devil if we thought that would help the cause. So, okay, he was working the other end of the line.

Ward: Do you feel that you have fairly well covered the background to the turning point?

LG: Yes; it's so hard to tackle some of these questions. You're pulled by a couple of things; one is that you're pulled by this business of saying "What the hell happened?" I guess it's like you lost an old friend, you're suddenly aware, "Why doesn't the son of a bitch ever call?" I mean, what the hell ever happened?

Ward: You made some remarks along that line in the last . . . .

LG: These things were bound to concern me, plus something else happens which is not a good thing; I start to speculate too much. Why? Because the answer is not at hand; or it's an answer I don't want to accept.

XXIX THE SAN FRANCISCO NEWSPAPER STRIKE

(Interview 35: 21 November, 1978)

Rank And File Discontent

Ward: Lou, you wanted to discuss an incident that occurred during the 1966 Longshore negotiations.

LG: It really wasn't an incident as such, Estolv, but I'd mentioned some of the things about the "mech" plan that I thought were really pretty much a mistake. One of the things that was noticeable in the 1966 caucus, before the negotiations, was a series of demands around this question of onerous work.

While the contract provided that the men had the right to stop work if they thought the work was onerous and they could stand by - in other words, work around it - until the arbitrator came along and gave a spot ruling, that only worked in rare cases. By and large the men when they are on a job will have a tendency to meet the hook.

There were a whole series of demands around that and they did get an arbitrator's decision that they didn't have to belly-pack sacks, which means taking a sack from the pallet board and then walking it say twenty feet, thirty feet, whatever, and throwing it into place.

Ward: That was onerous work?

LG: That one they won an arbitration on, but the outsize loads kept coming down, and this was obviously a big issue at the caucus; the demands reflected that. Not a great deal came of that, other than general language to the effect that if these large loads came in the employers were supposed to add men or machines. But the language was not that tight so as to actually compel the addition of men and machines.

It was a demand that made a lot of sense. If there was to be a mechanization program where the men got a part of the machine, a by-product clearly should not have been that the men just simply work harder or take bigger loads without the machines. That would be a circumvention of the contract, a clear violation of its spirit. Some of this feeling must have been reflected, even though the members renewed the contract in 1966 for another five years.

Three of the major locals voted against the contract, even though it carried by a majority up and down the coast. That was the first indication that the contract was going to run into more and more difficulty; eventually it did, and by the time the contract expired in '71 a strike became just about inevitable.

Ward: That's something we should discuss next, isn't it?

LG: That's at a later stage. Incidentally, some of the things where I pretty well went off on my own were not contrary to union policy, but they didn't make Harry particularly happy.

Ward: Well, I gathered that; you made it quite clear.

LG: Right. As for example in trying to give the students a hand in the free speech movement; appearing with Cesar Chavez and others at Sacramento; the civil rights sit-ins; the Palace Hotel incident.

Just let me mention that meanwhile all the regular work in the union was going on from day to day; contracts expiring, heavy negotiations in Hawaii and in San Francisco and up and down the coast. I spent a lot of time in Los Angeles, on issues they had there; helping out on some of the tough problems they had in Sacramento -

Ward: Well, all along you were the nuts and bolts guy, weren't you?

LG: No, not necessarily; Harry was back in the saddle. His trials were behind him and he pitched in on a lot of these things. But in almost all the things other than longshore, a good deal of the responsibility would fall to me. And other things were going on simultaneously, like our efforts to spread our wings and make contact with every part of the labor movement.

Re-affiliation, as far as I was concerned, was never that important. It had become far more of a liability than a value because you automatically take on the restrictions of the new structure, whereas we had a certain independence and freedom of movement.

There was no problem with the ILWU working with groups like the International Typographical Union in the Phillips and Van Orden strike in 1964, which was important. There was no problem working with the Teamsters where our relations were good.

In 1961, I think it was, Larry Steinberg appeared at our convention in Hawaii. In 1963, Jimmy Hoffa was the principal outside speaker at our convention. In 1965, Harold Gibbons appeared in Vancouver, Canada, at our convention. In 1967, as I recall, Einar Mohn appeared at our convention in San Francisco. In almost each case they kept referring to the specific things that had been achieved in the Teamster-ILWU relationship. That was in the warehouse field, which was catching an awful lot of attention nationally, throughout the Teamster Union and other unions as well.

Helping In The Printers' Strike

LG: An example of this manifested itself in 1964. The Typographical Union, one of the oldest unions in the United States, had at one time broken with the AFofL on the issue of the CIO. In 1964, the printing companies had begun to build up a group of

LG: trained, professional strikebreakers. These were fairly skilled men who moved from place to place wherever they had strikes; they were the guys who were used to help break the Portland Oregonian strike.

They were the ones who were used later in the strike of the Herald Examiner in Los Angeles; I'm sure that they were also the group that in more recent years broke the back of the trade unions at the Washington Post. This was a sort of trained pit of cobras that they transported around the country.

I think it was around this group that you had a lot of the agitation going on to prevent the importation of strikebreakers from outside a state or a city. There was a big movement in San Francisco for similar legislation, and in the state.

But in 1964, the ITU had a strike against Philips and Van Orden, a big publishing house, whose headquarters were off China Basin along Channel Street. They had the juiciest printing job in San Francisco, the telephone book; that is year around work, making changes and so forth; a very big job. Later on, I think the establishment was shifted around, with part of the printing going on in San Jose, part of it in San Francisco. This strike had gone on for some time and they had run a lot of strikebreakers.

Well, while most of the unions were supporting the strike and observing the picket lines, one of the unions - I forget which one; it might have been the Printing Pressmen - maintained that there was a jurisdictional overtone in one of the strike demands of the ITU, so that the Labor Council, while it did not attack the strike or condemn it, did not give it wholehearted support.

Yet, it was obvious to many of us that the much more overriding issue was not one of these little jurisdictional hangovers; it was the use of professional strikebreakers, changing a whole pattern in this city. One of the things we had managed to establish over all these years is that you don't move in strikebreakers.

LG: The ILWU had a handful of people involved in the strike in a very indirect way; we had some warehousemen in one of the printing establishments that was struck. There was a whole group of plants being struck, but it was Phillips and Van Orden where the move had been made to use the strikebreakers. We had some warehousemen, either at Crocker or at Schwabacher-Frey, which also had printing establishments.

The ITU asked for help and we began to get some guys off the waterfront. Jack Shelley was mayor, and he was not too unfriendly; the cops weren't that anxious to protect professional strikebreakers.

One afternoon there was a fairly good sized demonstration, just as the shift was ending; some of these professional strikebreakers who had gotten pretty bold, got rousted around. The papers played it up as a big riot; it wasn't anything of that proportion. Sure, some of them were run down the street and a few of them might have gotten bruised, but no big deal. Anyway, the mayor promptly called a meeting up at his office. I went up there primarily out of curiosity and also because we had a few men involved.

Well, this is simply an example of our having contact with all these unions. Here were all kinds of guys I'd known, including men I knew from as far back to the Labor Council days in San Francisco in the thirties.

They decided they ought to elect a chairman, so they elected me chairman. I found out later why. They said, "If we pick any one of the other guys, some of the internal quarrels had gone on so long, two-bit jurisdictional beefs and internecine quarrels, it wouldn't have worked. You are the nearest thing to a completely neutral party who could be trusted." So, I wound up as spokesman for the combined unions.

Ward: For the ITU?

LG: For the ITU and the other unions who were involved in this strike.

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LG: So we all wound up in the mayor's office; the office was jammed with people. He had called the employers, and in they came. They were represented by an organization called Graphic Arts Association - some fancy name - an employer body; the mayor was emphasizing that the thing had to be settled, he didn't want to see violence.

We didn't try to discourage this kind of speech. As a matter of fact, we were spreading rumors around that if something wasn't settled why we would just shut down around the warehouses and the waterfront, and march up there and see what happens.

Nobody wanted that, and we didn't want it either, but there was no harm in having this word spread around. I happened to be sitting next to the chief of police, whatever his name was at the time. Maybe he knew me from the Palace Hotel beef, but anyway we kept chatting and he said, "This thing ought to be settled," and I said, "Sure, and it can be settled - it's not all that difficult; the number one job is that the professional strikebreakers from out of town have to go - there's no compromise on that." And he said, "I agree with you, this is no way to settle things."

Jack Shelley was doing very well in emphasizing the need for people to sit down and work out their problems, but he suddenly announced that he had to go to a luncheon. So, I inquired around from his aide, who says, "Well, it's a little luncheon he promised to go to near Aquatic Park." "That can't be much of an affair," I said.

So, I told the police chief that if Shelley left, this meeting was going to blow apart; nothing was going to come of it. He went over and whispered to the mayor. The mayor said, "You'll pardon me for a second." And he went and cancelled the luncheon.

Finally a small group of us wound up in that little ante-chamber that Jack Shelley had, a sort of a private little room where he had a built-in bar and some lounge chairs to sit around in.

LG: The head of the employers association says to me, first crack out of the box, "What the hell are you doing here?" I didn't answer him and Shelley said, "Look, he's been elected chairman of the strike committee here, or the negotiating committee, and if you don't like it, it's too bad; we're not asking you what you're doing here."

Of course, Shelley as an old time trade unionist knew his business about things like that; unions have the right to pick who they please and the employers to pick theirs. This finally wound up in a settlement; all the professional strikebreakers were run out of the place. The strike was settled, basically, on that issue. As to what happened on the tag-end jurisdictional beef, frankly, I didn't even pay any attention.

I thought once the basic issue was resolved and the unions recognized the importance of pulling together, the other things would fall in place. The man who was in the area from the ITU, international representative Milt Lomas, was very good, very helpful, so we cranked out a settlement. The only reason I mention the '64 ITU strike is that it reflected our ability to retain our contacts over the years.

Ward: Harry didn't object?

LG: Of course not; as a matter of fact, Harry made it a constant point in discussions that while we might have been unaffiliated, we were not isolated. Sure, there were some who got the Red horrors; who began to duck for fear of contamination.

Ward: You said there were times when George Johns crossed the street rather than have to say "hello" to you?

LG: Yes.

Ward: He was the secretary of the San Francisco Labor Council?

LG: Right, yes. This comes up in a peculiar way later on, but when you think of people like Dan Del Carlo, who remained a strong, powerful and loyal friend over the years. Old man Joe O'Sullivan, great old

LG: guy from the Carpenters Union. He'd been, I'm sure, an ex-IRA man; if he's still alive he's still fighting the Irish Rebellion. Guys like Joe Murphy, Ed Rainbow . . . .

Ward: You're talking about the old Wobblies?

LG: Many of them were old Wobblies; solid trade unionists.

An Assist In The Guild Strike

Ward: You were speaking about the theory of the union, keeping up the old ties with former allies, no matter what branch of the labor movement they belonged to. Harry was in favor of your action in the Printers' strike in 1964. I have the impression you were very helpful to the Newspaper Guild in their strike in 1968 and that Harry didn't approve.

LG: That is not correct.

Ward: Let's talk about that strike.

LG: Yes. There was a point at which he thought I should pull out of it; I had done enough. The '64 thing was really only an incident in many years of work, but it has a correlation in that these same unions I was talking about in the printing trades would all also be involved in the 1968 newspaper strike, with very few exceptions.

As a matter of fact, the only exception was the Warehousemen; they would not be involved in any kind of a dispute with the newspapers because those employers were the same people who ran the San Francisco Newspaper Printing Company - you know, a separate company.

Ward: San Francisco Printing Company.

LG: The two newspapers (The Chronicle and The Examiner) didn't merge, really; they merged circulation and advertising and printing and formed the San Francisco

LG: Printing Company. It is owned fifty-fifty by the two outfits, so that it becomes a joint printing establishment, both automatically involved when those negotiations took place. The '64 strike has a bearing on what happened in '68. In 1968 there was a strike at the San Francisco . . . .

Ward: It started in Los Angeles, didn't it?

LG: No, there was a strike against the Herald-Examiner in Los Angeles. That was quite a unified strike, which might have begun with the Newspaper Guild and the Mailers. The Mailers are an affiliate of the ITU. All the unions respected the picket lines there, even though the plant was in the same snake pit I told you about; the professional strike-breakers were moved in and eventually the Herald-Examiner did begin to print.

After that strike had been on maybe two or three weeks, there was a strike here in San Francisco by the Mailers. Part of it might have been a feeling of solidarity with the guys in L. A., but the balance of it was that they had gone almost a year without a contract.

Sixteen Unions Involved

LG: The Mailers Union in San Francisco was maybe 180 - 190 people, but when the Mailers walked out, everybody respected their picket line. The whole business went down, the Mailers, the Web Pressmen, Photoengravers, Stereotypers and Printers, the Newspaper Guild and the Building Service Workers, who have the janitors. There were 16 unions in the newspapers.

The strike had been on about thirty days, maybe a little more; I had been getting some very peculiar rumbles, because I've always made it my business to keep in touch with guys in the union movement when there are strikes.

There are certain stages in these things where other unions ought to try to lend a hand, because sometimes the Labor Council would be of help and

LG: sometimes it wouldn't. In this case, the Labor Council seemed to be playing no role at all. I found out later it was because some of the unions had no patience with George Johns.

Anyway, some of the rumbles I was getting were very bad; that the strikers planned to go down and picket one of the newspapers down the peninsula, the Palo Alto Times. Here was a newspaper where all the typographical workers were organized and had a contract, but the drivers didn't. These are aberrations; they don't help particularly and sometimes they can be enormously . . . .

Ward: It thins the ranks, too.

LG: It not only thins the ranks; you get serious questions raised by the workers involved as to whether this is imposing something on another union because of reciprocal assistance. The basic issue was, can you win a strike in San Francisco? Mayor (Joseph) Alioto had just taken office and in a few days the newspaper strike was on, so that he couldn't have been terribly happy about the whole thing.

I was at some dinner party; I think it was at the Pike's house - Esther Pike, Bishop Pike's wife. Herb Caen was there and we were talking. He made a remark that bothered me, "Some of you guys better take a stronger look at this strike.

"Right now, it looks all right, but I don't like the sounds I hear among some of the newspaper men. They feel they don't want to get stuck with an endless strike and they fear after what happened at the Oregonian and at the Herald Examiner, maybe it was now their turn to get the business." But I had already been looking into the thing and I said, "Well, I've been poking around on it and I'll try to find out a bit more."

So, I spent a bit of time, mostly just by myself, figuring out what if anything might be an assist. Well, there were a couple of things that were a real help to me. I recalled a highly successful joint strike conducted in Hawaii, primarily under the leadership of Jack Hall, when they struck the Advertiser or the Star Bulletin or both. That was

LG: a completely united strike. The question of separate bargaining around specific issues that concerned just one group of workers was secondary to the question of the entire group of workers sticking together as a unit.

The other thing that occurred to me was that we might have a real break in San Francisco if we stopped to analyze the fact that we had two publishers who were not necessarily pulling in the same direction.

The Hearst paper would obviously feel that it was struggling not just against the unions here, but also struggling in solidarity with their own chain, as manifested by what was going on at the Herald-Examiner in Los Angeles. The Chronicle was a horse of a different color; it prided itself on being pretty much a domestic paper. It's always been locally owned by the Theriots and Camerons.

Ward: A family paper.

LG: A family paper, pretty much. Also, I had gotten to know Scott Newhall (former editor of The Chronicle) quite well, but not in connection with the newspaper. I had gotten to know him as one of the people who was working with Frank Oppenheimer and me to get the use of the Palace of Fine Arts for the Exploratorium. Between Scott Newhall and Mayor Alioto and Scott Newhall's wife, Ruth, we were making quite a bit of progress in that direction.

There was an occasion to go over to Scott Newhall's one day - I think it was a Sunday - and as we were leaving, Scott says, "Well, what about this newspaper strike? You know, that damn thing is murder." I said, "Well, I think there might be an answer around."

Anyway, to my mind things began to fall in place pretty quickly; some device had to be used that would accomplish two things: first, in the event an idea was proposed that made sense and it was rejected, it would not be the kind of an idea where the rejection in itself could weaken the strike. It would have to be the kind of an idea where a rejection would automatically strengthen the strike.

LG: If, on the other hand, it were accepted, things would begin to fall in place. In other words, it could not be a one way street; you couldn't be an unrequited lover in a situation like that. If you make a proposal which may sound fair but does not strengthen the strike, all you've done is to indicate weakness, the fact that you are beginning to run. The thing that occurred to me was literally what we had done in Hawaii, except that in San Francisco this would be much more complicated.

I started checking over the agreements that the local newspaper unions had, just by calling individuals; these agreements expired over a span of time that ran around sixteen, eighteen months. In other words, the newspaper publishers never got through negotiating. They would no sooner be through negotiating the ITU, then it was the Mailers; when they got through with the Mailers, they would be negotiating with the Stereotypers.

When they got through with them, it would be the Photoengravers, and then they're negotiating with the Web Pressmen. Next they had to negotiate with the Newspaper Periodical Drivers; then the Building Service Workers - the janitors and everybody - and then, of course, there was still the Guild. It was an amazing round robin.

Getting The Crafts Together

LG: And then I thought something else was happening in the newspaper unions, one of the end results of narrow craft unionism; I think they realized it's got to go. Even at the present moment there is talk of merger between the Newspaper Guild and the ITU, the Typographical Union.

They have had endless discussions between the Typographical Union and the Pressmen, a logical merger. There's no reason why lithographers ought to be a separate union. Part of this is the old craft psychology, and it goes back to damn near the medieval guilds, I guess. It sure as heck does not meet the modern industrial method of getting work done.

Ward: It's an interesting situation that you've posed here. What kind of proposal could you make that even if rejected, could still strengthen the strike?

LG: It would have to be a proposal that would take away from the employer the one and only anti-union argument that could have a bit of validity; that was that he was just plain sick and tired of having to negotiate sixteen months in a row, being constantly whipsawed, constantly in a roundy-go-roundy, never assured of stability or the ability to print from week to week. It was very common for some of those unions to open a contract and have it hang fire for four months, five months. By the time that wound up, they were overlapping another contract.

Incidentally, it wasn't doing any union that much good either; in that kind of bargaining what often happens is that you lose sight of what is a good agreement because the measure of the agreement is whether you did better than the other agreement, so a guy can go back to his members and say, "Fellas, you may not think this is an awful lot, but just remember one thing: we got one-half cent more than the other group." Well, of course, all this is meaningless dribble.

So, the thing that occurred to me was to have a plan whereby you have joint negotiations and a common expiration date. That would result in several things; one, those unions who were merely observing the picket line would promptly get a stake in the strike. Even a union like the janitors, the Building Service Workers, whose contract had another fourteen months to run, would have a direct stake in the strike.

Those other unions that were in a supporting position, their members would feel they had something in it. If the employers then turned it down, you'd have proof perfect that they were not interested in getting common negotiations and a common expiration date and getting rid of the big headache they kept prating about all the time - the endless negotiations.

Their end purpose would be shown to get the same job done that they'd done at the Oregonian and other places, to break the union. Once that issue could

LG: be driven home to the rest of the labor movement, the strike would be strengthened multi-fold. It is around something like that that you can pull in other unions and get mass participation. Well, reaching that conclusion in my own head was only part of the job . . . .

Ward: To sell the other guys?

LG: Then, there was the question of going around; in some ways this was hilarious. You don't do that by asking people to the office. I just wandered around the picket lines and chased down people I knew. Of course, I was bumping into a lot of the guys that I'd known for many years, including those who had been mixed up in '64.

I decided I would first go to the ITU. They knew me best; they were the group which had been under the gun at Phillips and Van Orden. I said, "Look, I think the answer is to pull all the unions together and make some proposal that would put the employers over a barrel; they either negotiate or if they say no dice, you haven't hurt yourself; if anything you have strengthened the strike."

They said, "What do you have in mind?" I said, "What I have in mind is to announce that the unions have gotten together and have agreed to immediate negotiations for all unions and a common expiration date. Not joint bargaining; parallel bargaining, all at one time." Leon Olson of the ITU, his reaction was "Well, I'll go along; your advice sounds okay, but you're not going to get anybody else."

I went down to see Jack Goldberger. He played an important role, and he was very anxious to maintain that role. For many years he was sort of the labor liaison person with the publishers; he knew them personally. Jack Goldberger's reaction was very much the same as Leon Olson's, "I'll go for it, but you're just beating your brains out; you don't know these unions." "Ah, what the hell," I said, "it's just costing the ILWU some of my time; it's not costing you anything." He said, "Sure, go ahead - try."

LG: And I said, "Well, will you join the thing? That's what I want to know." "Oh, yeah, yeah - but you can't get the others." I think it was Harry Rice, a photo-engraver or stereotypist, an old-timer, who said, "It's a good thing, Lou; I'll go, but I don't know if it will work." The Web Pressmen were easy. They're old friends of mine and they thought like the ILWU in many respects.

Ward: They were always pretty good - Dan Murphy and . . .

LG: They were always pretty good. The old guys were gone, but Dave Ratto of the Web Pressmen was around and the other guy, a red-headed guy; they went along fine. I stopped by to see Fred Fletcher of the Newspaper Guild. Fred was all in favor of it; I think that he knew some of the rumbles in his own ranks. As a matter of fact, I remember bumping into Charlie Raudebaugh (a veteran Chronicle reporter) whom I had known for years; he was very active in the strike, working his tail off, putting in all kinds of hours on the picket line.

Ward: That was the strike where (the television show) "Newsroom" came in to being on KQED?

LG: Right; by that time "Newsroom" was on the air. Guys like Bill German, Jim Benet and Dick Meister set up "Newsroom." Some of them stayed with it, and some of them went back to the Chronicle. I think they were all Chronicle people on "Newsroom."

Anyway, finally, I thought I had talked to enough of them so as to start calling them in; we began some sessions in my office, and they went on for several days. I didn't have every single one of the unions there. I didn't bother much with the Building Service Workers. I knew them very well, and they of all groups could not be hurt at all. If anything, they would pick up the gravy.

After three or four days of this kicking around, I said, "Okay, why don't we call a meeting at one of the hotels and ask all the unions to come in?" And we called all the unions together at the Sir Francis Drake.

A Plan That Succeeded

LG: I said, "Everybody here knows exactly what I'm talking about; the idea is that we approach the mayor and tell him that we have a plan which calls for a common expiration date and joint bargaining and that this basic issue about stability in the industry be resolved; that the unions are prepared to sit down right now. We think the mayor ought to designate somebody who can act as his personal representative and get the thing under way." The mayor was very anxious to see the strike settled.

But meantime I had been thinking, who do I get to act as the personal representative of the mayor? I didn't want to do that myself because I'm not a conciliator, I'm not an arbitrator; my role was strictly as a partisan. If it fell apart then the monkey would be on my back. The unions would say okay, no harm done, but now let's get some other things done. We had to start drawing up other forces and begin to align the rest of the labor movement to give them a hand.

So, I got in touch with Sam Kagel. I knew that he'd been active in newspaper negotiations and had arbitrated many times for them and had acted as a conciliator on some of the contracts. He knew the field and he knew the publishers. I asked Sam if he would act as a personal representative of the mayor if he were so assigned, and did he think that the publishers would sit down?

Well, I got a call back from Sam the very next morning saying that he was walking down the street and bumped into Phil Knox, the chief of the publishers negotiating committee. Just accidentally he bumped into Knox and Knox said, "Oh, heck, if they can pull that together, which I doubt, I'll be glad to be there; that would be one of the great solutions." So, there was no question that the door was open.

LG: Anyway, we finally sat down at the Sir Francis Drake and I drafted this telegram to be sent to Mayor Alioto. We decided it was best that we not send it by wire but to deliver it by hand, and the right man to do that would be Jack Goldberger.

So, Jack bounced up there with the telegram and we waited around. Finally the mayor called the hotel and I talked to him. I had met him before during the election campaign and he said, "It's a great idea, but who did I suggest he designate as his representative?" And I said, "My suggestion would be Sam Kagel." He said, "I've never met him." I said, "Well, I will introduce you to him - he's standing right here." I introduced Sam over the phone and he got designated. (laughter)

It was at that point that I told Harry what had happened; it looked as though things were going all right and Harry said, "Well, you've done your share on this thing; you might as well duck out of it now." I said, "I'm prepared to duck out, but I don't think I ought to duck out until I go back and tell the guys." He didn't object to that, but he assumed it was time for me to get out.

Well, I went back and told them, "Well, okay, fellows - it's under way now. Before Kagel gets going, we should spend the rest of this afternoon hammering out a program, so these don't become endless negotiations. I know each one of you has demands - some of these demands can be endless. My suggestion is that each union here pick out two key demands which they must have."

I think it was mainly the conversion of any kind of gains to their seven-hour day, as well as the amount of money involved. Some of the unions like the Web Pressmen said, "We don't have anything to speak of." I said, "Now if you have any additional items of grievances, those can be handled, but the two key demands are the ones on which to concentrate. You're not going to be able to negotiate jointly. I suggest we also figure a rotation as to how we do this."

I wanted an outfit like the Web Pressmen to go first, because they would be settled in fifteen, twenty minutes or half an hour. Then we went right

LG: down the line. I think the Building Service was last; my God, they picked up a hunk of money, and this was 14 months before their contract expired. One thing we insisted on was that everybody had to get something, because there was no purpose in having a common expiration date and then having to bargain 14 months later.

With the common expiration date it made no difference when the contract expired. If it was the Mailers contract that was open, so you negotiate now. And if the contract of the Building Service Workers was due to be re-negotiated 14 months from now, you pull it up and it has a new beginning date and a new expiration date, the same as all other contracts; otherwise the thing can't work.

The order was worked out and Kagel was in the picture; the employers were up in some room in the hotel and I announced - by that time things were on a very friendly basis, though it was costing me the drinks, because these guys were on strike -"Okay, it's time for me to step out; I've got my own work to do."

And one man got up; it could have been this guy from the Web Pressmen. He said, "Well, I don't know about some of the other guys, but we all appreciate what you've done, Lou. I want to talk my mind and this is no bullshit; if you step out of here right now, this thing is going to fly apart." I said, "Why?" He said, "We've spent so many years quarreling with each other, that all those quarrels are going to break loose again, so you stick around."

I said, "Look, I don't have a single member involved here. The ILWU doesn't have a personal stake in this thing." He said, "Well, I'm just telling you what I think." And another guy chimed in, so I was stuck down there most of the time for almost two weeks, while these endless discussions were going on with the publishers.

It finally fell in place and the thing wound up in good shape. I was asked to go to some of the meetings, but the only meeting I attended was with the ITU at the Labor Temple on a problem with the contract. I guess I could have gone over to the Guild that afternoon but by that time, I was pretty

LG: pooped. It had been a long, long stretch. There was one man from the Mailers Union who was a tower of strength - a guy by the name of George Duncan; he was part Indian and he stuck with me like glue all through this thing. He had a lot of confidence in what we were doing. He was also very proud of the outcome.

The only rumbles we had afterwards had nothing to do with the settlement. We had a meeting of all the unions the day we were to ratify, or it was all going to ratification, on a Saturday or Sunday; we had the full union committee there - not just the individuals who were on the various negotiating committees - and I had drafted a statement saying that the settlement was an example of what could be done and obviously it should be used as a pattern in Los Angeles and other places; and that this settlement was only the beginning of the battle against the L. A. Examiner.

It would include, if necessary, a national boycott of the entire Hearst press, at which point some of the newspapermen - I think the Examiner - began to bridle a bit and there was some grumbling. They didn't think that this was appropriate, but it passed. Whether they carried through, I don't know; they did in some cases. But that was the only grumble; not a single one against the basic idea, which, by the way, is still being used in the newspapers. That's an interesting chapter.

One of the amusing sidelights, when talking about Harry: I bumped into Art Hoppe (a Chronicle columnist) a month or so later. It was at one of the get-togethers that Margaret Fabrizio gave; she's the harpsichordist; used to play with the (San Francisco) Symphony. She had an annual Bach Birthday party, and they were great affairs. People would bring their own bottles of wine, or some food, and the party would go on all day long. Musicians would drop in from all around the bay area; some would play chamber music, others would play more elaborate things, depending on how many pieces they could put together. I remember running into Art Hoppe at one of these things and we were talking and he says, "That was a good job on the newspaper strike; I talked to Harry and he said he assigned you to it." I didn't say anything; it was Harry's feeling, I guess, that nothing could happen as far as the ILWU was concerned unless he was party to it.

Ward: Sort of, he was the ILWU.

LG: There was a good deal of that feeling, unfortunately.

Ward: I guess, during the course of the years, it would be pretty hard for him not to feel that way. It would take a man of unusual philosophical bent - after all, he knew damn well that he was called the "Great White Father," "the Nose" and "the Limey"; these rather affectionate terms.

LG: I don't find those things too bothersome, because I developed my own frame of mind that you couldn't let these things bother you or prey on you. If you did, you would start eating yourself alive. I went a different route; maybe that didn't contribute to the highest degree of harmony. In other words, we were not always singing in tune.

The route I went was that I had certain work that was pretty well carved out for me, particularly Warehouse. That, without any question, was one of my main responsibilities. My contacts with Local 6 and the master contract were very much my responsibility. Contact with the Teamsters Union became a steady and consistent thing, where a lot of time was spent.

Ward: Let me tell you a story; it happened at a recent meeting. Len DeCaux, who was the first and principal speaker at that meeting and the author of the book on the Wobblies which has just come out, had just come back from a trip to Hawaii. His comment on the trade union situation as he found it over there was summarized in this statement: "Harry wasn't as popular in Hawaii as I would have thought; Lou is the hero to the Hawaiians."

LG: Well, I'd say, he didn't talk to enough people, because the guy who really carries the greatest affection among the Hawaii people is Jack Hall.

Ward: I thought that, from what you'd said previously. But, however, here's one man's reaction coming from over there completely cold and talking to whoever he talked to.

LG: Look, I like Len DeCaux, but his observations in a situation like that can be just as accurate as somebody bringing back the foreign policy of a country after speaking to a cab driver.

Ward: Well, anyway, it was his reaction and I took it for meaning something.

LG: Well, that could be for other reasons -

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XXX MORE ABOUT THE SIXTIES

A Very Tough Clash

LG: In the latter years in Hawaii, particularly around the sugar negotiations, things did get to reach a very tough clash, a very tough clash, yes.

Ward: Do you mean to say where Harry openly disagreed with you?

LG: Openly disagreed, openly threatened to fight certain settlements and went directly to the leadership of the union there in opposition to some of the positions I had taken and some of the agreements that had been reached. But that skips a few years and gets us to 1974 and later.

Ward: Well, did he feel you hadn't gotten enough?

LG: Oh, it's a process that would warrant a description all by itself; it involves the technique of turning somebody's left end. We'll get to it another time.

Ward: Now, we're talking some more about little incidents in the sixties that are important.

LG: Yes, it would be a mistake to leave out a couple of things. I had mentioned from time to time that there was a growing cooperation with the Teamsters; 1967 was one of the peak years for the Northern California Warehouse Council. By that time it had matured pretty well.

Cooperation Works Well

LG: My own feelings were that the Teamsters were a group that could be worked with. I've read all the stories about some of the things that go on in the Teamsters in other parts of the country. Frankly, I don't think they are applicable to the west coast. No question that the Teamsters have a tendency, some times, to come on very hard; when they feel they have certain jurisdictional rights they'll go to great lengths to enforce them.

We're familiar with their movements in the canneries; in the case of the Farm Workers, I've already mentioned the odd position I found myself in where I couldn't agree with the Teamsters, yet I wasn't about to break with them. It meant walking a careful line, making it quite plain that I supported the Farm Workers and Chavez, including giving them all kinds of information which came my way, as to what was going on among the employers and helping out as best I could. As a matter of fact, I was down at Cesar's headquarters last Saturday. I spent the day down there at La Paz.

Ward: Were they negotiating something?

LG: No, they were having a meeting that had been going on for days of a group of young people who are being trained to help them handle negotiations. I didn't want to go so far as to say that there are no secrets, but in some ways they think there are things there that aren't there - special techniques.

I made it plain there are no magic tricks; you don't pull rabbits out of the hat. I emphasized the importance of doing your homework; once negotiations are under way or the battle is under way, it's too late to do your homework. That means knowing the workers, knowing their demands and how far to travel with them; knowing what a couple of loud people will say, and also what the rank and file thinks.

LG: In other words, there are a whole series of things which have to be done which I consider to be purely homework, basic work. I think we as a union have established a good deal of skill with things like caucuses, bull sessions in warehouses, contract conventions. It's awfully important to get that reading of the membership so as to know how far to go, because that's realy where your strength lies.

I told them the obvious things; that the employers will scream and yell and tear their hair, "You're coming in with more demands; we're going to go broke," and so forth. They always put on this hysterical act but it doesn't mean anything.

But '67 became a focal point in warehouse; we had built up to it for a long time. There were beginnings of inflation, which meant that we required substantial wage gains. Mind you, there had been a period where the labor movement was semi-dormant; a number of lean years.

Ward: You were saying the Warehouse Council had reached a high point?

LG: High point, yes; the liaison with the Teamsters Union was pretty deep-going and it wasn't confined just to Warehouse. We found that we did square away jurisdictional problems pretty quickly.

We even had a formula that applied in the case of mergers of two warehouses. For example, if a company had a branch in San Francisco and another branch over in Oakland and the two merged, we didn't bother with elections or anything of the sort. If they had more people in that warehouse than we had, our people transferred with all their rights protected. The other way around would apply to us.

As a matter of fact, Chili Duarte used to take pleasure in needling the daylights out of me, particularly if there was a gang around, when we worked out a merger. A small plant of Durkee's (Durkee Foods) merged with their major plant in San Francisco which was under ILWU, and the whole thing was moving to San Jose under another name; Shed Bartush, I think it was called. We decided that people who belonged to the Teamsters would

LG: come into the ILWU, but so that nobody would get hurt we would "sandwich" seniority; in other words, we would take their man with the longest seniority and put him in, say, under our man with the longest seniority, if our guy had more seniority.

Well, the net result was bound to create some peculiarities; in one case it resulted in a guy who I think was 30 years old, being given 35 years seniority. Chili would have no end of fun with this one. He'd say, "I'd like to know how that could be worked out; how can I get 35 years seniority when I'm 30 years old?" I kept telling him we'd have no problem; he wasn't 30 any more. The thing basically worked out without a lot of friction.

All of these things had been going on. The '67 negotiations were intense. A good deal of hard work went into the thing. The employers had made proposals that came a long ways from what we wanted; there had been some attempts for some reason or other partly - I guess because the atmosphere of the Vietnam War and the national atmosphere were not good in those days - to take away some of the things we had in the contract. We wound up with a stewards' meeting at the Longshore building that was literally jammed; must have been 1800 there, and this was a joint stewards' meeting.

Ward: 1800 stewards!

LG: 1800 stewards - ILWU and Teamsters. From that we took a strike vote. As a matter of fact, we went into a new type of strike vote where all the votes would be pooled and counted together; in other words, the majority would govern. We gave power of attorney, before negotiations, to the Northern California Warehouse Council.

We also decided we would observe some of the rules the Teamsters had, because as far as we were concerned they made some sense and in our case would not be bothersome. For example, they have a provision in their constitution that if a contract is ratified by 50 percent it's a contract, but before they could strike, they would have to turn it down by 75 percent. Most people would look at that and say, "Hell, that doesn't make any sense. It's not democratic."

LG: The question as to whether it is democratic or not is really unimportant; the important thing is, what sort of a rejection do you need to conduct a successful strike? Well, the rule of thumb we had was if you couldn't get an 85 percent strike vote, your chances of winning were awful slim.

If you have 85 percent prepared to walk out you're going to lose some of that the first two weeks, the first time they miss a pay check. That's going to go down to 70 or 75 percent. Then, depending on how long the strike went, a few more will be lost; with a hard core of 60 to 65 percent you're damn well off. If you could maintain anywhere between 75 and 80 percent then of course you have much better chances of winning. You had no guarantee of winning, but then you never have a guarantee of winning any strike.

If you go into a strike with 51 percent, insofar as I'm concerned, the chances of winning are about as much as a snowball in hell. All the employer has to do is simply sit and measure that point at which the 51 percent gets to be 49 percent and then he starts demanding a vote either on his last proposal or one that's even worse yet. So some of these rules did not bother us.

The idea of having joint votes didn't bother me for other reasons. I had confidence in our ability to mobilize our membership and get out the vote, so that pooling the vote, if anything, would be a bit of an edge on our side. These rules began to have an impact in making the whole machinery a lot more cohesive; the '67 negotiations finally wound up in a strike. It lasted three weeks - about - but was very effective.

As a matter of fact, I think it was the first time some of those people had ever been on strike. Strikes had not been new to our people. They had gone through them in past years. There is an interesting thing where many of the Teamster warehouses would not be too far from the ILWU warehouses, but the bulletins and news on the strike that they got all came from the ILWU bulletins, because we were putting out a bulletin almost every day.

LG: Publicity committees are one of the keys to the organization of a good strike. All these things developed the only kind of genuine working class unity that counts, the unity down below. People get to know each other and help exchange pickets, coffee wagons; if theirs didn't get around, ours did. Great spirit developed out of the thing. Negotiations finally wound up with quite a successful agreement; it was ratified overwhelmingly: 80 percent or thereabouts.

The meeting was held at the Cow Palace; there were some 5,000 people there; a joint meeting and the contract was presented jointly. George Mock chaired the meeting. He did a good job and he believed in the Warehouse Council.

I presented the report, but in one stage we had a couple of rambunctious characters who walked up and seized the mike. He said to me, "Look, why don't you handle this part of the meeting?" These characters were getting to him. Well, it wasn't much of a problem really. I could tell by some of the people at the mike which way they were going to lean on the thing, so it didn't amount to a great deal. The meeting went off very well and we came out with a very good contract.

A Sociological Lesson

LG: There were other things in the sixties which go to make damn clear that we were not out of the woods as an organization. It was in the early sixties when a strike we had against Colgate Palmolive in Berkeley lasted almost ten months.

But there, interestingly enough, we got the help of the Teamsters in New Jersey - not the workers in the plant. These workers were in an independent company union.

Now there is a national council of Colgate workers - it meets regularly; they do a certain amount of coordinated bargaining. The help we got back there was out of the Teamsters Union; they shut down deliveries for several days. These things helped.

LG: Paul Heide and Ole Fagerhaus were a two-man boycott team which travelled all over the country, labor councils and everything else, getting literature distributed and so forth. As a matter of fact, it was during that Colgate strike that I learned a sociological lesson that had nothing to do with the strike.

Ward: Like what?

LG: Well, I think the strike was about six months old and I had gotten a copy of the Colgate financial report. They had branches in around some 45 countries around the world, and it is a big international conglomerate. The report was fairly accurate. It said they had lost some money in the United States because primarily of a lengthy strike in Berkeley, but when taken in conjunction with all the other operations, the corporation as a whole did all right.

When I saw this thing I just kept grumbling all day long, grumbling so badly that when I got home, Terry said, "Look, you're in no frame of mind to sit around the house and have dinner. Why don't we just go out and drive around maybe for a while and we'll have a bite to eat in Tiburon or some place."

So, we're driving around and we drive out past Paradise (scenic Marin County spot) out to the end of that peninsula where the Nike site is; we know some people who live around there and we passed one of these places where they built a big marina. I started saying something like "Oh, that's where all these sons-of-bitches live we're dealing with at Colgate. Here they are, living high off the hog and they don't give a shit what happens to our people." Terry said, "You're not fit to talk to."

I said, "You're absolutely right - I'll see you later." So, I got out and said, "I'll see you." And she drove away. I started walking and figured it would be good for me. I must have walked at least a mile or so - it's a long peninsula - and I was still wearing the same clothes I had on at the office - shirt, tie and jacket.

LG: One of these local cops passed me and examined me very closely, but he didn't stop and say a word. So, I just kept walking; then about 15 minutes later, he passed me again. I'm still walking, and I suddenly realize why he's looking at me. I'm a stranger and the way I was dressed, I either had an assignation up the street or I was going to visit a neighbor or something.

You don't stick your nose into that sort of thing; you can get yourself in wrong with some of the people who live in that neck of the woods. The last time around, he had a guy with him, a witness or something; he finally stopped and said, "Where are you going?" "Taking a walk out here, obviously."

"Well, where do you live?" I said, "In Mill Valley." He said, "You're going to walk all the way there? Why? That's miles." I said, "No, no, I'm just going as far as Tiburon." He said, "You want a lift?" I said, "Fine." I was pretty tired anyway. I had been walking about an hour and a half. So, he gave me a lift down to Sam's (a Tiburon restaurant).

I suddenly realized that the only reason he didn't stop and hard-time me was because of the way I was dressed. If I had been wearing some beaten up shorts and a broken down shirt, I would have been rousted. So, you can learn some of these lessons awful fast.

We had long strikes like that because there was still this feeling on the part of the employers that we could be taken. Another thing that should be mentioned is that during this time it was not just around the warehouse contract that we were getting results. There were also joint committees set up between the Teamsters and the ILWU on the questions of jurisdictional problems. I'm talking now about problems relating to the waterfront. These unfortunately, did not get results anything like what we had in Warehouse.

I recall for example during that same period, we wanted to do something about the Sugar Act and the manner it which it was being administered; the Sugar Act was in the hands of the sugar employers;

LG: while it was in the sugar division of the Department of Agriculture, they held these hearings that were mostly junkets. The hearings were for the purpose of establishing fair and reasonable wages, and whatever the employers were paying was fair and reasonable.

We finally got them shaken up enough so they once made one change in the case of Louisiana, some improvement. In the case of beet sugar, the farmers have a great deal of political influence; in the case of Puerto Rico a fair and reasonable wage was 35 cents an hour - unbelievable!

We decided to set up a joint lobby to go to Walter Freeman, who at that time was Secretary of Agriculture under (President Lyndon) Johnson; there I suggested that the Teamsters give us a hand because they had some of the beet sugar plants. Sid Zagri was assigned, and the Packinghouse Workers had Charlie Fisher there. The Liquor and Distillery Workers had a few beet sugar plants here on the west coast; they took part. We formed a joint lobby to pressure the administration to do something about the Sugar Act, so we had cooperation.

Health Plan Alternatives

LG: Towards the later part of the sixties I had gotten to know Einar Mohn quite well and I talked a good deal to him about this business of health and welfare and the escalating costs of medical care. With his help we formed the California Council for Health Plan Alternatives. The latter became a very broad organization, with the Building Trades in there, the Hotel and Restaurant Workers, Joe Belardi; even the IATSE.

Ward: A pretty smelly outfit.

LG: Right. Al Erickson from that. The Operating Engineers, and their record is not one that will ever be terribly distinguished. But the AFofL joined in. Ziggy Arowitz was in from the L. A. Labor Council - a good guy. Einar Mohn was chairman and I was secretary. The financing got to be

LG: fairly good, particularly when the ALA was formed - Alliance for Labor Action. That was between the Teamsters and the Auto Workers.

Ward: Yes, you talked about that -

LG: I recall attending a meeting in Monterey of the Alliance for Labor Action; many of the things they were doing were worthwhile. I thought it would have done us some good to get in there and see what could be accomplished. It didn't last all that long. I don't know if it was a question of financing falling out or that Reuther died.

The ILWU made an annual contribution to the Council. It wasn't very big, but it was an issue on which Harry became more and more nettlesome; yes, nettlesome, including inventing stories that we were trying to interfere with the direct collective bargaining of unions on health and welfare -

Ward: He didn't like that?

LG: No, now as to why I'm not sure. True, the organization might have been a bit before its time. But the issues were correct, to try to do something about the terribly escalating medical and hospital costs and to promote something like Health Maintenance Organizations or group plans like Kaiser; to get some sort of a grip on medical costs.

Now it's become a national issue. I don't expect a great deal to be done under present circumstances, but we got considerable response, a lot of assistance from people, not just in the unions but from outside the organizations, people who felt there was just no grip by the consumer on what was going on for medical care. All I'm saying here is that this era encompassed the medical cost problem.

Hoffa Goes To Jail

LG: Then, other things were going on in the Teamsters, some of which, of course, were very disturbing. Jimmy Hoffa went to jail in 1967. Incidentally Earl Warren, the Supreme Court Chief Justice,

LG: dissented on sending Hoffa to jail. Earl Warren was very disturbed by the government's reliance on this professional stoolpigeon whose testimony sent Hoffa up; this guy Partin.

Partin had been convicted of several felonies; he was up on charges on everything from Mann Act to burglary, to falsification of records, to stealing dough from the union; you name it and he was charged with it. All of a sudden none of these charges were being pressed.

And he wormed his way into the confidence of Hoffa, who was easy-going on that score. If somebody could even pretend that he had done Hoffa a favor, that was enough for him. I think he made some bad mistakes; sure enough, Partin was the guy who turned up on the witness stand as the prime witness against Hoffa. Fitzsimmons was sent in (as Teamster president); he was assistant to the president, or general vice-president, set to take Hoffa's place in case he went to the clink.

The ILA thing was an up and down sporadic affair, and all over the landscape. It was spread all over the place like a mad dream.

XXXI INTERNAL POLITICKING

(Interview 36: November 28, 1978)

The Fight For Vice-President

Ward: Lou, you want to discuss a couple of more items in the sixties?

LG: As quickly as I can. A couple of things developed internally in the union which have some significance later on. One was that around 1965 Chili was anxious to run for vice-president and director of organization. I gather that either he or George Valter at the time talked to Bob Robertson. Bob had done a good job over the years, but organization had slowed down just about to a walk . . .

Ward: And he didn't play any role in Hawaii?

LG: No major role. He came down there a number of times, but not in the fundamental sense of organization. Jack was primarily responsible and I gave him a hand, plus other people like Matt Meehan and Frank Thompson and others who pitched in and did a good job; a number of staff people went down there, Martha Ezralow went there on assignment; Teddy Kreps was there, so there was constant help from the International during the Smith Act period. Morris Watson, for example, was . . . .

Ward: Let's get back to Chili.

LG: Chili; anyway, Bob Robertson had indicated that if he could pick up a pension of $500 bucks a month, he was thinking of hanging it up. I think the pension was voted him; it could very well have been in 1965 at the convention in British Columbia. We had Teamster representation there; I believe it was Harold Gibbons who spoke at that convention. Hoffa couldn't make it.

Well, Bob did not up-stakes at that time. Chili made up his mind that he was going to run in 1967, regardless. Well, sometime, I guess it was in late 1966 or maybe early in 1967; I was about to go to lunch and Harry said, "I'm having lunch with Chili and George (Valter); come on along." So, we sat down at Original Joe's and Harry was very blunt about the whole thing. He said, "If Chili decides to run against Bob in 1967, I'll go all out to campaign against Chili." This was quite a blow to Chili, because he had always considered himself an unquestioning supporter of Harry.

The net result was that Chili didn't run against Bob. Later on, there was a further session when Bob indicated he was going to leave in 1969; and Chili said in that case he definitely intended to run.

Harry's attitude then was "Well, times have changed; I've changed my mind. I think Bill Chester is the man who ought to run for the job." The reason for all this, I'm not sure myself, other than perhaps a feeling on Harry's part that with Chester around Harry would feel that the balance in terms of the officership would be such that he would have no problem, particularly if I continued to be a bit of a pain in the ass, which I was . . . .

Ward: You would have two warehousemen up there?

LG: Well, there had been two warehousemen over the years; Bob Robertson was a warehouseman. This did a great deal of personal damage to Chili. He was pretty well determined to run anyway, but to get into a rivalry of that sort would have raised a lot of hell; you would have had a black-white thing, as well as . . . .

Ward: It would be very divisive.

LG: Yes, although I believe Chili would have won. He had good support in Hawaii; Local 6 had made very strong alliances with Local 142 in the Islands, with a good deal of mutual assistance in almost every beef. But none of this was to come to pass. Chili died in January, 1969. He and his wife were up in Reno taking a few days vacation; he had a heart attack and passed away.

This created a different crisis within the union. I think for a while Chester felt he had a clear field. On the other hand, Jack Hall by that time felt that most of his work in Hawaii was done.

Ward: Lou, you told about the possibility of a contest between Jack and Bill Chester. And it was partly solved by reopening a second vice-presidency.

LG: Right - which we had had before. Jack's attitude, when Chester announced he was going to run, was well, help yourself. Jack was confident of his ability to take the election, that's all. Notwithstanding, I didn't feel that was a good thing -

Ward: Yes, black vs. white.

LG: True enough; as to whether there would be enough of a load for four people, a lot depended on the degree of internal organization and the division of labor. Almost every union job is what you make it. The title doesn't mean a hell of a lot, except to some people; basically you can make a lot of work out of it, or you can figure out ways and means of doing nothing. Some people are called good administrators because that's the expertise of seeing that nothing stays on your desk. Somebody else gets the responsibility for it.

It was my judgment that we were better off not to engage in an internecine fight. And mind, all during this time, there was nothing fundamentally wrong with the general union program. But the Chili thing was an almost open breach with Warehouse. It was another way of saying that that period was finished, even though there is a tremendous amount of logic in having somebody like a warehouseman as director of organization, because there is where the organizing has to be done.

Ward: The longshoremen were all organized?

LG: The longshoremen had all been organized. If there were bits of organization still to be done, my God, they had the machinery and the strength to do it. One of the things Jack did was to urge the longshore locals to get out and organize a lot of the unorganized workers around the waterfront. For example, people who work for the city, if it was a city harbor like in the Port of Tacoma, performed work in the main that could be done by longshoremen themselves. There was no need to add organizers.

Warehouse, of course, was still the big potential. Anyway, all these things came to a head at the '69 convention. That's when Jack Hall was elected, and so was Chester. What Harry's reaction was to Jack Hall I'm not positive, but it was very short of being cordial.

Ward: It was not cordial?

LG: No. As a matter of fact, Harry began to make statements that maybe there ought to be physical examinations before somebody could run for office, because Jack had been sick in Hawaii.

Ward: He had diabetes and poor eyesight?

LG: He had diabetes; the eyesight was no major handicap. He couldn't drive a car, that's true, but that's no great problem for an organization director. When he's traveling it's always invariably by plane; one of the staff meets him, and generally they have to go around together anyway, so that was no great handicap.

Jack had also had an attack of appendicitis which developed into peritonitis. Some of the insulin treatments taken for diabetes apparently can cover up a lot of things, so that before they diagnosed the thing as appendicitis, the appendix had already broken, and the net result was that he'd had a very bad siege. There's no question but that beginning into 1970 Jack's health went down hill. He developed what might have been Parkinson's disease.

Ward: The last time I saw him I noticed the tremor.

LG: Right. But his doctor wasn't sure whether it was that, or that somewhere along the line Jack had had a minor stroke. But Jack was alert and he moved over here. Still and all, he functioned fairly well. True, his sickness did become progressively worse. At one stage, where we were holding workshops up and down the coast, he required an escort to make sure he got back to San Francisco all right. On another occasion when he was in Hawaii, the guys were concerned enough that they had one of his old friends, John Kelley, ride back to San Francisco with him.

Ward: Well, it looks to me that Harry had his buddy and and you had yours.

LG: Well, no - I didn't think of it in that fashion. I never felt that any of these things in terms of union policy can really be settled by taking a vote, like two against one. I never felt that this made union policy. The way you made union policy was to argue the thing out; sometimes it might take hours or days.

Eventually you reach a meeting of the minds by just hammering away at the issues until you get consensus. I believe we followed this procedure pretty consistently in the executive board and in the enlarged executive board meetings, so that a question of composition of leadership might have a different construction. Harry might have seen it that way, I don't know. I didn't see it that way. I did think it was important to have somebody as director of organization who would feel that organizing was important.

It could very well be that something else was going on, namely, this growing conviction in Harry's mind that the union had run its course, that the time had come for it to go back in the ILA, or something like that.

Ward: How did that conviction demonstrate itself?

The Membership Questionnaire

LG: It demonstrated itself more and more sharply in an interesting way. During the latter part of the 1960s, I thought it would be a good idea to do a survey of the membership and find out what they thought of the union; I think we were the first and only union which has ever sent out a questionnaire to every single member. In other words, we took all the names on The Dispatcher mailing list and sent them a copy of the questionnaire. The survey started in the end of 1966 and was tabulated in 1967.

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Ward: You were saying you received a pretty substantial return on the questionnaire.

LG: I think the return was better than 25 percent; quite good, considering that a lot of people won't sit down and take the time to write out what they think. But here was a questionnaire which asked people to speak their minds. They were unsigned.

Ward: Oh, they were anonymous?

LG: Anonymous, yes. Did they think the meetings were too long? Do the officers take up too much time speaking? Too many resolutions? Do we spend too much time on foreign policy? On foreign affairs? Should there be more time on domestic affairs? Were grievances handled promptly? Were they buried? Do you feel the business agents are doing a good job? In other words, the kind of questions that most officials would rather not have an answer on.

There was a full page to write out additional comments; to write out in longhand what they thought about what the union should do. The thing that came through most clearly to me was that no one was talking in terms that the union had run its string, had done all it could, that its hey-day was over and it was time to merge with another organization headed someplace else. None of that was in there.

Ward: Was the question put in the questionnaire?

LG: No, but you could tell very quickly when you asked, "Where do you think the union ought to go?" Copies of the questionnaire went into The Dispatcher, plus summaries of the replies. There were any number of suggestions as to what the union ought to be doing.

We asked the question, "Do you think the union is doing as well or better than other unions, or just as well?" Invariably, what came through was that there was an intense degree of loyalty to the union itself; that by and large the membership loved the union. They didn't think in the terms that Harry kept expressing, namely, that the union had run its course.

We did something else, beginning in the sixties, which I thought was very constructive. We began holding a series of workshops, and these were unusual affairs. Anybody could come to the workshop, practically. There was no pay for time taken off. In other words, a man might have worked that weekend but went to the workshop instead. He didn't get paid for that. If he had to travel to the workshop, like Coos Bay, we'd pay his room and meals - the exact amount.

So, it attracted an awful lot of people who really wanted to go. There were no holds barred; the group made up the agenda; discussed what they wanted and in any direction they wanted. Of course, it would take a little while to loosen up, but most of our guys are pretty vocal and they don't mind saying their piece.

So, during these workshops some of these things began to come into focus and I guess in part they developed into something close to a debate between Harry and myself - they didn't come for a floor show. Obviously there were differences of opinion on whether or not the union had run its string. I recall one workshop where Harry came on sort of hard on this, and I said, "More and more I'm convinced that it's a self-fulfilling prophecy; you repeat something like this often enough, after a while you believe it. After you believe it, it has to come true." So, ...

Ward: Maybe he was confusing himself with the union.

LG: Could be - I don't know.

Ward: Old men come to the conclusion quite frequently that there isn't any point in going further.

LG: Yeah, I know that happens. Those workshops took place in Canada, Seattle; we had one in Portland, one in Southern Oregon, Northern California, Southern California. We had two very successful workshops in Hawaii, big ones; they resulted in what I thought were good exchanges of opinion. The same thing came through to me that the membership was not terribly interested in going anywhere else. They were far more interested in strengthening what they had.

Of course, there were all the other problems that were climbing up our backs. You found a great deal of hostility against the Teamsters, particularly by the longshoremen, on account of these container beefs. As a matter of fact, the container issue became a sort of a make-or-break issue in 1969.

Ward: That container mechanization cost a lot of jobs to the longshoremen?

LG: No question about that, not talking about a manufacturer's load, a container that's made up at the plant, General Electric or RCA (Corporation), where they load the stuff just the way they want it, including all the insulation and packaging and safeguarding of the material. Those containers, obviously, you can't screw around with; they should go on board ship just the way they are. If it's a similar container going directly to a manufacturer, the same principle would apply.

With the containers there sprang up all kinds of little container freight forwarders who were doing this work with almost anybody. Over in the east bay there were furniture workers stuffing containers; other places, teamsters; other places just non-union.

Over in Hawaii, you'd be driving around and see a container near somebody's house. In other words, a guy and his kids were unloading that container and making deliveries. This was the work we were

LG: concerned about. We felt it should have remained on the waterfront, because that was the same as making up a longshore load or taking one apart.

Ward: They were palletizing jobs?

LG: Right. In some places, we did reach freight station agreements. We had a container freight station agreement in Hawaii. We eventually had one here on the Pacific Coast; we worked on an eight hour day, rather than the six and two. The wage rates were very close to comparable. These, of course, had to be steady men because they had to know the container facility and everything else; but the hostility still continued.

In some cases it becomes easier to attack some worker than to figure out ways and means of forcing the guy who really has the brass balls, namely the employer, to get the problem corrected. Later on we got a container agreement, but a good deal of that was invalidated by the courts; including taxing the container that came in and was not handled by our people.

All this notwithstanding, there still was no feeling on the part of the guys that the ILA could do much good. Yes, there was general talk, constantly, that if there could be a single union or at least single bargaining of all longshoremen around the country that would be added bargaining power, but the economics and logic of the situation didn't quite meet the bill, leaving aside the question of the structure of the unions or the manner in which they operated, which in many respects were like day and night.

Our direct relationships here, in terms of any one economic group, would be the Teamsters, because it would be the Teamsters with whom we would have to reach complete understanding so as to get the container thing straightened out on the west coast. The ILA couldn't do that for us.

Anyway, the workshops were good things; I thought they would help clear the air on some of this stuff. They did and they didn't.

Ward: Well, with Harry going around talking about maybe the union was washed up, how did that sit with the people at the workshops? Or did they pay any attention to it?

LG: They paid attention to it but they weren't buying it. Harry has been known to go off on some of these tangents; sometimes the guys figured, okay, it made sense; or he's just trying out an idea, that's all. It might have had a little bit of an impact, but nobody was carried away by it - no marching music, believe me. You didn't hear any.

Total Polarization

LG: In 1970, though, I don't know what the devil was going on. It could have been a combination of a number of factors. It could be that Harry had decided that the time had come to dive into this Warehouse thing. Remember, never sell Harry short in his boldness or his ability or his perseverance. The guy had it and still does, and also a very quick and inventive mind.

Ward: Well, I gather that by 1970 it had become clear, at least to you, that Harry was more or less anti-Warehouse.

LG: I don't think it was anti-Warehouse; what had become clear to me was that Harry had reached a stage where if I were in favor of something, he was against it. As a matter of fact, he made that crack one time about Jack Hall: "If Jack Hall is in favor of something, I'm against it." I was trying to brush the thing off lightly when I said, "Well, look, Jack's probably in favor of sex, and do you have to come out in opposition to that too?" That levity, though, didn't get anywhere.

Ward: You say he apparently made up his mind to do something about Warehouse in 1970.

LG: Right. Because during the 1970 negotiations, we felt that the 1967 Warehouse victory should pay off for at least another contract or two; the employers

LG: realized that we could pull the ranks together. In other words, '67 was a sort of a test where this was no longer palaver; it wasn't being done by mirrors and it wasn't just being done by joint stewards meetings.

There's no question that those things packed an awful lot of weight; '67 was a test as to whether or not we and the Teamsters would all go out together and shut things down, and while we might have had a very brief strike in '61 for three days, or '64, 1967 was quite different; we really did go out. That head of steam was still there. And we had a series of proposals . . . .

Ward: '70 now, you're saying?

LG: In 1970; none of them were really that earth-shaking, but they were fairly substantial proposals because of inflation, which was beginning again. True, it wasn't the easiest of times, because the Vietnam War was still running along and, if anything, intensifying. As a matter of fact, I think it was around 1970 that the United States invaded Cambodia.

In the 1970 negotiations, I began to get rumbles back that Harry would talk to people like Leroy King and to others - Leroy King was our regional director - and complain that he was kept completely in the dark by me; that I never spoke to him or told him what was going on.

Well, that was not true, because every few days I'd stop by his office and tell Harry, "Here's what's going on; it looks like it's going to be a bit rough." When we got an agreement to work day by day after the contract expired on June 1, I said that we've also got a guarantee of retroactivity. He said, "You mean you have a guarantee of retroactivity even if you strike?" "That's the way I read it," I replied.

"That can't happen," Harry said. "I've been around long enough to know that once you're on strike all bets are off; they can say, 'Oh, yes, we did talk about giving you retroactivity, but now that you're on strike, forget it,' and it becomes another strike issue, that's all." I said, "But we do have retroactivity nailed down." He wouldn't buy that.

LG: Then later on I find out that he's making bets; he made a bet with Bill Burke, one of our business agents, a $5 bet that we wouldn't get 85 cents, or something like that. . . .

Ward: That's what you were asking?

LG: We were asking a buck in wages plus a series of fringe benefits that would run the thing up to about a dollar and a half.

Ward: I think you said $1.40 once.

LG: $1.45 -

Ward: And Harry was betting that you wouldn't get more than 85 cents?

LG: Yeah; then, he made a bet with Sid Roger. I think Sid made a mistake making the bet.

Ward: He made a mistake collecting it!

LG: That I'm sure, but the big mistake was making it. I finally asked Harry, "Now, look, you keep saying you're not being informed, you don't know what the score is on negotiations. I suggest we have a session on the thing and raise these questions with the committee." So, we called the committee in; that was primarily the officers. I didn't want to make it a public airing before the whole membership; if you began to bring in a lot of the stewards and board members, you'd go round-and-roundy.

Ward: But you had the business agents and people like that.

LG: Yeah, they were all there and perhaps a few more. By that time Curt McLain was president. He had taken over the presidency of Local 6 after Chili died. Harry went into a discussion - which I've always been somewhat in favor of - that before you actually head into a strike you look at all the alternatives. I still agree that the easiest thing is to call a strike, but winning it is another story. Well, Harry went around and around on this thing; what would be wrong with a settlement on wages for around 80 cents or say 90 cents? Back and forth, and back and forth.

LG: The committee by that time had its heels pretty well set. We knew that we wanted a buck in wages for the three-year span, and needed major improvements in the pensions and health and welfare and a number of other items that were important to us.

We kept emphasizing that. We said, "The package is going to have to be somewhere around $1.40, or she's going to break down." It was at that session where Evelyn Johnson, a black woman, business agent over in Oakland, finally turned to Harry and said, "Look, we've heard two hours of bullshit now as to what we should do and what we shouldn't do. What do you suggest?"

The meeting ended on sort of a bad note. In other words, nobody felt it was a constructive discussion. Even guys who were loyal supporters of Harry, guys like Joe Lynch, who still is, came out point blank. Joe said, "I think you ought to understand what we're telling you, Harry; we ought to get a buck forty and that's what the hell is in the cards."

Well, he began to turn up at some of the enlarged meetings. We would report back constantly to the full negotiating committee which included the strike committee, the stewards, and so forth. Somebody asked Harry, "What are you doing here?" And he said, "I'm here to protect the pensioners"; that we weren't doing enough on pensions.

Of course, one of our demands was to do something substantial on pensions. Later on when Bill Burke collected on the bet, Harry said, "Well, I accomplished what I wanted to accomplish, but just let it go at that."

Ward: How much did you get?

LG: What did we get? $1.45.

Ward: And Harry thought 85 cents would be enough?

LG: That's what he bet on. I guess he was turning the thing upside down, saying that if he argued this, then I would have to get more; one of those weird double-think rationales; or triple-thinks.

LG: Obviously he was completely skeptical about it. He was so determined to find something wrong in the negotiations, to see that the leadership that was being exerted was not adequate.

One meeting, held down in Burlingame fairly early at 9:30 in the morning, Harry turns up. He starts off by saying, "Well, I want to make sure we don't make some of the same mistakes we made in 1967." Well, in 1967 one of the things that had happened was this. I was hoping that out of the 1967 negotiations we could at least get the beginnings of a drug plan, in addition to the regular Kaiser coverage.

Ward: Oh, the drug plan?

LG: Yes, prescription drugs. We had reserves in the Warehouse welfare fund and I never believed in maintaining heavy reserves. I think welfare plans have to be predicated on planned poverty; in other words, you spend the money for benefits, not sit there and husband that money and see how much you can put in the bank. Anyway, we had put in some money from the reserves and so had the Teamsters; we had set up a pilot plan, maybe not the most comprehensive plan, but at least the beginning.

Well, this thing fell apart afterwards because the San Francisco Employers Council - which represented most of the houses which dealt with the Teamsters Union, led by Murray Parker - decided to try an end run, one perhaps that could be a fatal blow to the whole Warehouse program. On their own they initiated a drug plan, but just for the Teamster warehousemen.

I knew better than to double back and ask the Distributors for it; for one thing, you don't ask favors, and secondly, I knew what their attitude would be. I don't think they were any more enthusiastic about the joint negotiations than the Employers Council. There was a lot of discussion among the warehousemen; they felt this was a double-cross and why in the hell didn't the Teamsters stick by their agreement?

This was what Harry was referring to. Well, George Mock was sitting next to me and I was coming to a steam because I knew damn well that we had

LG: nothing to do with that. George Mock suddenly turned to Harry and said, "Now look, Harry, I know what happened; the ILWU wasn't responsible for that. We were, we did it. We made that mistake."

Inasmuch as Harry had started on that issue and it fell flat on its face, he had nowhere else to go, so he went back and talked to Einar Mohn. Then later he said, "Well, I talked to Einar Mohn and he said that things are under good control; that's fine." But when he came back in the meeting again, he must have been up all night thinking about this, because he fell sound asleep at the conference table. The employers weren't there, just the union. But that was his last appearance at the Warehouse negotiations.

We finally got a fairly good agreement. We got the retroactivity which we had been promised, but then a few weeks later some odd things happened. Harry apparently called J. Hart Clinton, the head of the employers; Harry didn't take my word for it. I told him, "Here's what the package is; this is how much we got in wages, forty, thirty and thirty which made a buck; and here's how much money we got for pensions, here's for health and welfare, and so forth. We picked up an extra holiday with pay and also firmed up the day after Thanksgiving as a holiday. Yes, and some other improvements, like the shift differential."

In most of our negotiations we don't play too much with figures; that's the employers' game because they have different techniques on how to measure a wage increase. For example, the employers will measure a wage increase by saying, okay, we work such a percentage of overtime; grant you a dime in wages across the board which is really 15 cents in overtime; maybe 20 percent of the work day is overtime and you have to weigh out the whole thing to get the figure. Also, obviously, there are certain automatic cost-related questions that go with wages.

In other words, your wages go up 20 cents an hour, your vacation pay is up by 20 cents an hour, your sick leave pay is up by 20 cents an hour, and so forth. Some employers literally force

LG: negotiations into that pattern, but we never have. In Warehouse we just stuck with the straight business that you can stop talking about overtime because as far as we're concerned, we don't work an hour of overtime. There's nothing in the contract that says they have to give us overtime. As a matter of fact, we would prefer it if they didn't, so we would just brush off those arguments.

But Harry called J. Hart Clinton and said, "How do you figure this package measures out?" I guess this was part of his paying off his bets. Clinton told him about the same thing I had told him - $1.45 or thereabouts. I thought that would end it, but Harry's not satisfied with that, so he calls Pres Lancaster. Pres Lancaster was a statistician and research man for the Pacific Maritime Association.

He was a very straight guy, a technician - did his work and did it honestly. As a matter of fact, I think that he and Linc Fairley developed a great deal of respect for each other: Linc had to work with him and Linc felt that he was trustworthy in his figures. But in the case of the PMA, in computing the cost of anything they used this system of roll-up.

Ward: That was because it was in the contract - 6 and 2?

LG: Yes - 6 and 2 automatically put it in the contract. You had a six hour day with two hours overtime and you were guaranteed eight hours. When you were called in to work you were guaranteed two hours overtime unless there was no work, in which case you got paid eight hours straight time. That had been written in the contract earlier.

Ward: It was logical to figure it out that way under that contract, but not under the Warehouse system?

LG: Oh, I don't know whether it was or wasn't. They computed in everything, not just the two hours overtime. They computed in the amount of work on Saturdays and Sundays, for example, because a large percentage of longshore work could be night work; that's all overtime work. Consequently they use this roll-up, as they call it. People call it

LG: "the creep"; there are all kinds of names for the technique where the employers balloon up their cost. Pres Lancaster said they had done some computations - they keep track, of course - and he figured that the cost of our Warehouse settlement was about $1.65, so Harry wasn't picking up any satisfaction in those directions. The thing that became clear in the 1970 negotiations was that insofar as trying to sit down and hammer out a constructive program and consider how you bring the whole union and the maximum amount of strength into play to pick up the best possible gains, that was becoming more and more difficult, because Harry just didn't think that way.

Then there was a very bad blow we suffered right in the middle of those negotiations - it was terrible. George Valter, secretary of Local 6, died in June, 1970. So, here was Chili gone, and George, two real stalwarts. As a matter of fact, we began to lose a lot of people during the sixties: Bulcke retired, Henry Schmidt retired, Dick Lynden died, so the casualties were beginning to tell.

I guess the union was getting older. Anyway, that was a bad blow. The only thing we did that could best commemorate George was, to add another demand on pensions. You see, we didn't have the regular widow's pension, but we threw a demand in there that if a man died between the ages of 60 and 65 and had put in his years of service, his widow would get half of his pension. It's still called the George Valter pension.

It's not a great deal in exchange for a loss like that, but at least it was something for George. The only humorous thing there was that we had one B.A. who was not the brightest guy in the world; a good, honest guy, but he didn't know the difference between just sitting still or passing a note and speaking; when we finally had just about hammered this thing home, he turns to me and says in a voice that could be heard clear across the table by the employers, "Now, this will cover George Valter, won't it?" It's not that we were trying to be that devious, but I think the employers themselves understood what we were shooting at.

The Hawaii Hotel Negotiations

LG: Shortly after that Jack Hall died; the day after New Years in 1971. Prior to that I had to go down to Hawaii, and again that was an odd scene and I couldn't help but feel that Harry was going his own way; I had become persona non grata, for what reason I don't know. But there had been a hotel strike going on there for a long, long time.

Ward: Rutledge's business, wasn't it?

LG: No; it was a hotel strike by the ILWU. We had some two or three thousand people out; all the hotels we'd organized on the outside islands, like the big Mauna Kea hotel, Kaanapali hotel, a number of them. We had this hotel strike on and Eddie Tangen, who had been working with Jack, was pretty much in charge of the strike.

The strike was tight and solid, people were very loyal. Even the tour drivers, many of whom belonged to us, wouldn't drive up in front of the hotels. There was a bus coming from the airport with a load of tourists, like at the Kaanapali; they'd drive them to the public road and that meant these people would have to take their bags and walk all the way across the golf course to get to the hotel.

Well, by and large, the strike was fairly successful. We were having a meeting in British Columbia, as I recall; there was snow on the ground when that meeting broke up. One of the things that worried us was that if the struck hotels managed to sit out the Christmas season, which is usually very profitable in Hawaii - in those days there was still a good deal of seasonality; a very high season around Christmas time, and another high season around the summer months, with a lapse after Christmas - they could take the strike for another couple of months.

That concerned us and we had a good deal of discussion about that in Vancouver. Finally, it was agreed that Jack (Hall) would call Jack Burns.

Ward: Burns was then governor?

LG: Burns was governor then, yes; to tell Burns that the union had made a decision. We were not going to sit by and let the hotels starve those people over the holiday season; if necessary, we would find ways and means of spreading the strike where it could do some good, because after all a number of the Big Five were also mixed up in the hotels.

C. Brewer had a couple of hotels - Volcano House and one other; American Factors was up to its ears in the big Kaanapali development, near Lahaina. We figured that if necessary we'd go down and talk to the sugar workers. We had been building up to that; we were getting a lot of them to appear on the picket lines when they had time off, which was a good solidarity action; it could also be preliminary to spreading the shutdown. These were our friends, and the governor wanted to know if Jack would be down there.

Jack didn't feel up to traveling. I think it was during the Vancouver meeting where he said one of the things he had to do as director of organization was to take a look-see at Alaska and the organization work done there. Harry was making remarks that going up to Alaska in the winter time was a junket. And Jack knew that he was getting very sick, and made some remark, "Maybe it will be just a one-way trip."

Jack suggested that I go to Hawaii and give the hotel guys a hand. I went down there, and I didn't spend much time talking to the employers the first few days. I just talked to our own committee, sorting out the issues.

What was evident was that the biggest stickler in the negotiations was that the employers wanted a master contract, which was fine. They didn't want one hotel played off against the other. They were prepared to give some money in wages, but they wanted everything evened out. That meant that in the case of hotels where we had provisions better than other hotels, the latter workers would have surrendered some things. In the case of the Mauna Kea Hotel, we had a fairly good sick leave

LG: clause and a better vacation clause. The employers' demand would mean that these people would lose certain fringe benefits in exchange for a master contract.

Well, after getting all that dope together, I then deliberately wandered around town dropping hints. People were asking me, "What the hell are you doing down here." I said, "Figuring out ways and means of shutting down as much as we can around the Islands. We're not going to let them starve out these people in the hotels; they're a loyal bunch. If this thing isn't settled soon, all kinds of things are going to happen; at least all kinds of things that we can help make happen."

Then I spent a lot of time talking to McElrath, who had taken Jack's place as regional director. McElrath knew about the issues in the strike, although he wasn't playing that much of a role; Eddie Tangen was handling it.

Finally I came up with an answer that I thought would make sense. I said, "Look, I know exactly where you are frozen. You're frozen on this business that you're not going to give up anything, and we're right on that one. On the other hand, the employers are equally convinced that we're determined to smash their organization, and I think to some degree there is truth in that."

In other words, they felt that some of the hotels would crack, and an unravelling process would start among the employers. I said that issue had to be dropped completely; any idea of seeing whether we could make the employers fall apart has to go out the window. "We've got to give the employers assurances that they have just as much right to have a union as we have." With that behind us, I thought there was a formula which I could work out that would handle this problem.

Well, we finally met with the employers; it was an odd scene because on the one hand, there was Bob Grunsky, who was head of the Employers Council and supposedly the spokesman. I gather the employers weren't completely happy because they had also brought Phil Maxwell, who had formerly been head of

LG: the Employers Council, out of retirement to help in the negotiations. Phil, obviously, was thoroughly irritated with Grunsky. Grunsky had a very difficult habit; it was pretty common for him, when he got excited in the course of negotiations, to get up and pace back and forth behind the employers' table. It finally got to the point where we'd say, "Why don't you sit down for a while so that we can talk to you?" And one of the things he couldn't stand was any levity in negotiations; no sense of humor.

Anyway, I laid out our position. I said, "I want to put one thing to rest right now; we are not a damn bit interested and will be no part of any program - and it's my job to see to it - which has the intent or design to break up the Employers Association. You're entitled to it and this is not part of our objectives. We're going to stick with the issues. Neither are we going to surrender any of the things we presently have in the interests of common bargaining." I said we would work out something that could resolve both problems. Well, Grunsky for some reason or other . . .

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LG: He was so cranked up that he couldn't hear and I said, "There will be a solution here and it can be worked out if you can just be patient and give us a chance to spell the thing out."

Well, the guy I had been watching closely during the negotiations was the man representing the Mauna Kea hotel, the big hotel, the Rockefeller hotel. He obviously was very interested the moment I mentioned that there was no attempt on our part to rip their association, and that there was a solution in sight. But Grunsky obviously was on this tear.

Maxwell was trying to interrupt the meeting; Phil Maxwell, from the employers side. Finally, I said, "You know, Grunsky, you remind me of something that an old friend of mine said; he had come from the northwest and he said, 'You know, I don't like that man and I'm going to straighten out my accounts with him; I'm going to do it by the code of the west - shoot him right in the back.'"

LG: Then I said, "Why don't you guys just think about what I said and we'll meet with you this afternoon." I broke off the meeting.

Then, I sat down with the committee and said, "Look, I'm not going to advance any proposals until I've cleared it with the committee and I want to find out exactly how you feel about it. How many issues do you have left?" They had 32 issues left. I said, "The strike has been going on this long - you've been having meetings and you haven't squared away anything?" No, they never could get to the main issues because all they did was just concentrate on this one thing, nobody was going to take anything away from them. That's an easy rallying point, but it also means that you can get your feet stuck in concrete and can't pull them out.

I said, "Why don't we do this? We'll take these hotels and we'll have two agreements. One will be a three-year agreement, which will cover the things that are common to all the hotels, like the wages we're asking for. We'll straighten out these other demands, and you'll have to get through them in a hurry.

"Then we'll have a five year contract on those three or four items which are superior in some hotels to the others. The other hotels have to catch up to those within a span of five years, so we will have a two-fold agreement: one for 3 years and one for five. No one loses anything and the others pick all those things up in that span of time, either by progression over the full five years, or in the last two years." Everybody said that was fine.

So we got back there that afternoon and somebody had cooled Grunsky; Maxwell started doing the talking. I think someone had said, "Let Phil talk." He and I at least always had a talking relationship where there wasn't all of this shouting, or this marching back and forth.

He said, "Okay, what do you have in mind?" I said, "Here's now simple it is; we recognize your association, and there will be no attempt whatsoever to break it. The bigger you can make it, all

LG: the hotels you can encompass, the better we'll like it. Of course we'd like it a lot better if they're all in the ILWU, but we realize those are not the facts of life."

The hotels in Honolulu proper were mostly under Rutledge, and they later tried to encompass the whole thing into a single association, but Rutledge managed to break it up because he had some sideline deals with either the Sheraton or the Hilton.

I said, "Secondly, we are not going to let you carry the strike through the holiday season and then just starve the people out. We'll do whatever we can to spread the thing and bring up additional support. Lastly, there's a formula here to settle the whole thing, although you will still have to bargain out the minor items; and I spelled out the combination of the three and five years." Well, it was no great big stroke of genius, but it met that situation right on the nose.

The result was that by 3 or 4 o'clock in the afternoon, we had basic agreement on the principles, and I said, "Okay, I'm getting the hell out of here; I don't know enough about some of these individual grievances, but I suggest that you start working your way through as fast as possible." Of course, once the main things fell in line, then all the employers . . . .

Ward: It's like a log jam - once the key log is . . . .

LG: Right! Then all the employers began to fall all over themselves to get the thing finished. The thing worked out just fine.

Well, one morning while these negotiations were going on I was going for breakfast at the Ala Moana Hotel and Harry was sitting there; I didn't know he was in town; he didn't ask me to sit down. I sat down and had breakfast by myself, but I was a bit taken aback.

I thought, what the devil is he doing here? And how come he didn't call me? I couldn't quite make out what it was all about. For one thing, Harry didn't have any use for Eddie Tangen and it could very well have been that he was there to do a

LG: salvage job on a situation that Eddie Tangen had blown apart. But it didn't work out that way. As a matter of fact, a day or so later, they had ironed out the other issues. I was at the union building, either dictating some notes or some letters or having a talk with some people. When I went back, everything was settled; they had just signed, and they were all sitting around having a drink in the second floor patio with everybody feeling a lot better about the whole thing.

Then for the first time Harry talked to me and said, "Gee, these employers tell me you've got the best goddamned contract in the country now. That was a good job." Mind you, this when it is all over with. Not at any time, coming along and saying "Okay, where does the thing stand, what ideas have you worked out? Is it moving? Can it be moved?"

The end of that little chapter was that the word he was taking as to the agreement was the employers! They were the ones who told him it was a good agreement. (laughter)

These were some of the things that were happening. And I guess that's enough for the 1960s, and actually the beginning of 1972, because 1970 was the warehouse thing. Then I doubled back to the hotel thing which was in 1969. That just about takes care of that.

XXXII THE LONGSHORE STRIKE OF 1971

Bridges Snubs The Alliance For Labor Action

Ward: Very good. All right, what next? Do you want to talk about the 1971 Longshore strike? Or is that important? In '71 the mechanization contract ended again, didn't it?

LG: Yes.

Ward: And there was a lot of dissatisfaction with the conditions?

LG: Yes, I think that early in those negotiations it became pretty apparent that nobody could stop the strike. Things were blowing up; by that time Harry's feelings toward me were amply apparent.

Ward: He had reached the point that whatever you said, he said the opposite.

LG: Oh, in '71 he knew perfectly well how I felt about the ILA. He never discussed it with me or the other officers, as far as I know. About inviting the ILA guys, he just invited them. I don't know why. Well, in Hawaii somebody came over to me and said, - I don't remember who it was - "You're not going to lead a walkout, are you?" This was when the ILA guys got up to talk. Harry got the idea, or somebody did. I wasn't going to lead any cheering section; that was definite; nor was I going to lead a walkout.

Ward: You were getting your orders from "Pete King" that time?

LG: That's right; I was getting my orders from "Pete King." Then, of course, the move he made to have compulsory retirement by age 63, would have left me with one term in office.

Ward: Oh, yes - that was at that convention too. You said something about negotiations in Hawaii in '73 and '74 where Harry was troublesome.

LG: Yes, that goes over to '74 and . . . .

Ward: Is there anything in between '72 and '74 that you want to discuss?

LG: Well, there were a number of developments. Incidentally, one of the speakers at the '69 convention was Fitzsimmons. As a matter of fact, he appeared primarily at Harry's urging. During that time, the ALA was also beginning to function.

Ward: That's the . . . .

LG: Alliance for Labor Action, which was started by Reuther and Fitzsimmons. I recall talking to a number of UAW guys like Jack Conway and Paul Schrade, who were curious about how our Northern California Warehouse alliance was operating. I gave them as much detail as I could and I said that when you dealt with the Teamsters it was a different kind of a league.

Most unions are different. They're not all the same; the personalities are different, the structures are different, the lines of authority vary; all these things have their own character. I felt that getting together with the ALA would be a good thing for us. Fitzsimmons met with our Executive Board; we had a special meeting with him and he invited us into the ALA.

Harry said that we would take it under consideration, but he had no use for it. Why, I'm not sure. He distrusted Reuther - oh, not without good grounds. Reuther had a rather distinctive career of his own, you know. He'd make these annual pilgrimages where he spoke to all the Social Democrats in England, Germany . . . . Anyway, any tie-up with the ALA didn't materialize.

Ward: Oh, yes, Reuther was the great socialist who once went to the Soviet Union - he and Victor, his brother. Didn't they work in some factory there?

LG: That's right.

As a matter of fact, a newspaper reporter in the Soviet Union -Yuri Kutnetsov accompanied our group that went to the Soviet Union in 1959. I did a long series of articles on our trip, both the visit to Czechoslovakia and the visit to the Soviet Union . . .

Ward: For The Dispatcher?

LG: For The Dispatcher, yes. I guess it was the first attempt at a comprehensive study of the Russian trade unions. I was quite impressed with most of the guys I met. The Russians are good people. I have a lot of beefs with their foreign policy, like Czechoslovakia, but the Russians as a people are warm, hardworking and the system operates. Yuri Kuznetsov was the reporter who accompanied us on the whole trip. I remember picking up an issue of Trud, the newspaper, and it had a full page on our delegation and some places we had visited, some child care centers, and I asked him to translate parts of it for me. And I said, "Gee, I never said that." He said, "I know you didn't, but I had to fill up the page and I knew you wouldn't mind." (laughter) So, I guess like everybody else, they have to make their mark; a reporter is a reporter.

But it was he who told me - "You remember that story about Reuther getting married in the Soviet Union, and it had never been reported, and neither did he ever get a divorce?" I said, "Yes, I saw that in an American paper." He said, "I'm the one who dug it up. How much of an impression did it make?" I said, "None; those things don't carry as much weight with the American worker as you might think; it isn't any big thing, you see." But apparently, Yuri was the guy who had dug up that story.

Ward: It was a scandal?

LG: Yes - to him it was scandal. A lot of our overseas guys get married, sometimes for one night.

LG: In 1971 the high point was the convention that year and the expiration of the Longshore contract. The Longshore thing was shaping up into a strike, no matter what happened. I think it was a combination of a number of things - one, the mechanization program travelled too fast and made too many changes, without adequate protection. The men saw jobs evaporate, and nothing coming in its place.

In the case of San Francisco work had still been good because this was still part of the Vietnam War movement; a number of "B" men had been added. Actually, it turned out that far more were added than were really necessary. This really became a headache, because work opportunities dropped off pretty fast, primarily in San Francisco.

Then in the '66 negotiations, part of the monies were divided, you know. The first mechanization agreement in effect allowed for something like five million dollars a year, two million dollars of which was earmarked for a pay guarantee program. The balance went into this pension program.

The idea of shrinking the work force was very good. The money had not been used by 1966 and the result was that the caucus voted to just divide it up and pay it out to the "A" men, so that all the "A" men got something, around $1300 apiece.

The '66 contract finally did establish a new mechanization fund and also the institution of the pay guarantee plan: 36 hours for "A" men, a lesser amount for "B" men; now 36 hours for "A", 24 hours for "B", which can go to 30 hours. This, however, resulted in certain availability rules. These things created major changes in how the locals would have to function, part of it being the attachment of the worker to the job.

In other words, there was the question of steady men. The men who work casual also had to report five days a week in order to be eligible for the pay guarantee. In addition, the pay guarantee was supplemental to unemployment

LG: insurance, this to be worked out the way unemployment insurance operates, with a one week waiting period; then you're eligible for unemployment insurance.

It became a combination with some of the men never liking the idea at all. You still had a great many guys who said, "Look, I'm not down here to collect guarantees or unemployment insurance; I'm here to work." A good deal of independence, a general feeling that they didn't want to be trapped.

Now, in retrospect, you can say, "Well, could anything else have been done?" Maybe it could have been done much more slowly, with more safety valves, more protective forms; but whether the container itself could have been stopped indefinitely, that I don't believe, any more than the Luddites were successful in smashing the machines.

Ward: What was Harry's position on the strike? Did he support it?

LG: Oh, yes, he supported it. You might recall that Nixon came along with his pay board late in 1971, when the strike had been on several months. There had been some offers around from the employers. George Martin had taken Jack Hall's place by then, having been elected at the 1971 convention. George and I both felt, no great harm in going back in negotiations and perhaps nailing things down before the pay board became effective, but Harry was determined that there be no such thing.

When we suggested meeting with the employers, he said, "Go ahead and meet, but it's without me." When the pay board came along, Harry took a strong position; he said no governmental body was going to tell the membership what the hell it should or should not do. It was up to the membership; they would vote as to how they felt. Then, about that time the government got an injunction against both the ILA and the ILWU.

In early 1972 Congress passed a piece of legislation which empowered the President to order workers in marine transportation back to work.

LG: As a matter of fact, Nixon was so anxious to sign it that he did it while he was over in China. But during this period, some people feel that Harry in effect had decided "Okay, you guys didn't like the mechanization agreement; or you felt it was too long; or you didn't get enough of this, that and the other thing; and you insisted on striking. You're going to get a strike you'll never forget."

Ward: Did he tell them that?

LG: No. The Dispatcher is a house organ and you don't report a suspicion of that sort; it has no place in the paper. You're there to try to win things. The strike finally ran its course, I forget how long it was.

Ward: What was the main issue?

LG: The main issue was wages, pensions, container jurisdiction - some of which was cleared up but which was later nullified by the courts - the pay guarantee plan, a combination of all these things.

It was in January of 1972 that the entire negotiating committee, 18 of us altogether, flew back to New York City. That's when we met with Gleason. Harry had a column in The Dispatcher in which he advocated re-affiliation and when he went back there, he repeated the same thing: "As far as I am concerned, I came back here to get help and work out affiliation as well." So, he was pretty well out in the open about the whole thing. Well, Harry never had a chance to get these things done because . . . .

(Interview 37: 8 December, 1978)

Bridges Renews Affiliation Plea

LG: Even prior to the committee going back there to meet with the ILA, Harry had been writing a number of columns and I recall his making a report to our International Executive Board.

Ward: That was his column "On The Beam", wasn't it?

LG: Yes, and also in his report to the Executive Board Board the question of merger with the ILA or the Teamsters was raised by him. It was during the course of preparations for the longshore negotiations, or perhaps the strike was already under way. The Executive Board's position was that they accepted Harry's report unanimously except for the question of any merger or affiliation. That was to be taken up as a separate matter.

Later, when the strike was on, his "On The Beam" column would be a full second page of The Dispatcher because a lot of it was devoted to the strike and strike strategy; a good way of keeping the membership informed as to where we were going and how we were trying to get there. In that column he was pretty sharp about anybody who was critical of the idea of merger, critical of these people who attacked the ILA or George Meany, and so forth.

If you look back at his earlier columns in The Dispatcher, I doubt whether any kind of invective in describing the functioning of the ILA had ever been omitted. But in '71 - '72, the point he kept driving home was that somehow a merger with the ILA would resolve the container question.

The problem of jurisdiction was big; the total work impact of the advent of the container took on enormous proportions. The only areas where there was no change might have been the handling of logs in the Northwest; those log shipments had

LG: to be handled pretty much in the traditional fashion, although there were a number of improvements on that score, too.

When it came to general cargo movements, it reached the stage where every major shipping company had moved over to containers. Where some of the foreign lines might have lagged a bit, eventually they, too, moved whole hog into this area.

I suppose in part the fault lay with ourselves, that even with the initial mechanization agreements these things were not nailed down without any escape patterns. A distinction could have been made, and eventually was made, between a shipper's load and the container freight stations.

The container freight stations didn't own any containers. The guy who ran that operation, all he had was just a shed, a couple of employees and a bookkeeper; and, I suppose, somebody out hustling freight. He would be concentrating on those shippers who couldn't use an entire container; because more and more the containers moved to the 40-foot size and carried a substantial amount of cargo. Then he would have these dribs and drabs of cargo brought into container freight stations, and that's where the load was made up.

Finally we did get an agreement with the employers on a container freight station contract. The employers were to set up container freight stations where our guys would do the work, the basic thrust of our argument being that the shipowner who owned the container also had control of the container.

If a shipper decided to send less than a container lot, he could drop it at pier so-and-so where there's a container freight shed. He would get a receipt stating what container it's going to go on, the same way you would deliver other cargo for shipment. However, much of this container freight station work had already become entrenched in the Teamsters or other unions. I'm convinced the employers were heavily in collusion with some trucking companies.

Ward: A lower wage scale was involved, wasn't it?

LG: The wage scale was not that much different. I'd say the single biggest difference would be the speed at which the men would work. You wouldn't get any of our longshoremen working at the tempo the employers were able to get out of some of the other unions, or some of the non-union operations.

And of course they had a money interest because they could maintain the container freight stations, as well as the haulage and everything that goes with it. There were a good many court cases, including court cases against a tax on containers that had not been made up by the ILWU within a 50-mile radius of the dock.

Ward: That was thrown out by the courts?

LG: As I recall that was successfully challenged by some of the employers, and was heaved out.

Anyway, for some reason Harry thought that the thing could be solved in conjunction with the ILA. The strike on the west coast in '71 began July 1, the day the agreement ran out. We were still on strike at the end of September, at which point the ILA walked out on strike.

Nixon then moved toward a Taft Hartley injunction. So we were under the injunction and forced to go back to work some time in the first or second week of October. The injunction was for the usual 80-day cooling off period and that would go through October, November, part of December, ending with a vote on the employers' so-called last offer. Well, that last offer was made and there was no change from what they had proposed across the table; it was voted down by a very substantial margin.

Ward: This time the guys voted?

LG: Yes, it wasn't like 1948 when they boycotted the thing. The vote was somewhere in the neighborhood of 93 per cent to reject. The strike on the west coast resumed again in January, but even before it resumed we went back to meet with the ILA.

LG: Even though there had been some joint press conferences by Gleason and Harry where they announced a willingness to go along with a common expiration date, a common container program, and so forth, this turned out to be all verbiage as far as the ILA was concerned.

We weren't even hammering on the question of a common expiration date. We merely asked that if we sent pickets back there, they would shut down the Sea-Land operations. Sea-Land was one of the big container movers on the west coast; there could be the logical position taken by the union, notwithstanding Taft-Hartley and secondary boycott provisions, that this was a primary strike against the same employer, and we could at least try to nail down Sea-Land with the kind of container agreement the ILA had, including the container tax.

Gleason's attitude was, "That's not our position back here; we follow the policy of one down - all down. We shut down one company, we shut down the whole port." He modified it to say, "Well, if you send a picket back, we'll shut it down, but it won't do you any good; it will be enjoined and it will just be a grandstand play."

In substance they made it mighty clear that there was not going to be any help forthcoming. As a matter of fact, when Gleason was upstairs meeting with the shipowners on his own contract - and they did reach agreement during the period we were back there - some of our guys said, "Okay, more power to them, if our presence helps them get a contract, great; but at least they ought to acknowledge it." Which they didn't.

During the period when Gleason wouldn't be there, he had with us several of their business agents, particularly from the New Jersey side where a lot of the containers are handled. These men carried the ball and made it as plain as day that if we had any idea of pulling down those installations in support of the ILWU, the answer was "No."

All we wound up with was a lecture from Gleason to Harry on how to negotiate. So that I'd say when we left there, to all intents and

LG: purposes the tries for cooperation and re-affiliation really produced nothing. The most you can say was that on a couple of occasions there was some joint activity in Washington D. C. on improvements in the Longshore and Harbor Workers Act.

Another Try At The Teamsters

LG: It was shortly thereafter that Harry initiated some correspondence with Fitzsimmons on the question of merger. Fitzsimmons replied that - it was a sort of bifurcated thing - if there was any action on our part to try to get the container work, he didn't think it would succeed.

On the other hand, he offered an affiliation where the longshoremen would have a separate division of the Teamsters union and would be able to define their own jurisdiction. This obviously would include the right to define the container jurisdiction, which was Harry's main concern. Well, there was a good deal of work put in on the thing. Charlie Velson, who was assistant at the time to the officers, spent a great deal of time drafting different documents; nothing came of it; eventually the thing just sort of faded out.

Ward: Yes -

LG: And the workshops and the questionnaire we put out both indicated very strongly that the membership was not thinking in those directions at all.

Ward: Could we say that we end the discussion of affiliation with anybody at this point?

LG: Yes, I think we might as well.

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XXXIII VIETNAM AND OTHER PROBLEMS

The Full-Page Ad

LG: I might have gotten a couple of dates mixed up; that Hawaii hotel strike was in October, 1970, and the warehouse negotiations we talked about were in mid-1970. The hotel strike was settled in January, 1971.

Ward: In 1970 you reacted to the President's Cambodia . . .

LG: Yes, when Nixon started to win the war by invading Cambodia. I forget what the excuse was at the time. Remember, all during those years, regardless of expulsions, jurisdictional beefs; regardless of whether we were in the AFofL or out of it, or the CIO, we managed to maintain close relationship with the rest of the labor movement, whether it be the Printers or what have you. And what we did in this case is draft this ad . . . . (showing a full-page newspaper advertisement).

Ward: This was an ad blasting Nixon for the invasion of Cambodia?

LG: Yes; in contacting individual officials, the people in the ad had to be individuals who had some official post in a union, such as executive board member, president of a local, secretary of a local and so forth. You see the list of names; 451 names at ten bucks apiece. When you look over this thing, it is like a roster of trade union officials in the bay area. The response was amazing.

Ward: This is a full page ad in the Chronicle?

LG: Yes; the response to the ad was all good.

Ward: How did this show itself?

LG: I'd say it stepped up the whole campaign of putting pressure on Nixon to get out of the war. Petition drives were started in various locals. There was signing of petitions to the President by individual members. In other words, it got past the resolution stage.

Ward: This was coincidental with the student unrest, too, wasn't it?

LG: Yes, no question about that. I forget the exact time of the teach-ins and . . . .

Ward: Kent State?

LG: That's right. When did the Kent . . . .?

Ward: Kent was May 4th - right in there. When was the date of this ad?

LG: Monday, May 18th was the date of the ad. And, I'd say it was by far the most effective thing done nationally by the labor movement. Sure, the position of the AFofL-CIO hadn't changed any. Meany's position was still the same. Incidentally, some things happened; you might recall the incident when some hardhats beat the hell out of some kids in New York.

Ward: Yes, and led by the guy who later became Nixon's Secretary of Labor.

LG: I think so, yes; the guy who was president of the N. Y. City and N. Y. State Building and Construction Trades Council, Peter Brennan.

Ward: That's the one.

LG: And some of the characters from the ILA took part in that attack on the kids. Here, in complete contrast, you had an ad of this sort signed by 450 trade unionists in the Bay Area.

Ward: All right - you say the reaction was good, in fact I think you said, "amazing". What did the people do after they read the ad, that you know about?

LG: A good example, I think, was in Local 6 where they led letter writing campaigns right out of the warehouses, signed petitions and forwarded them to Nixon and their Congressmen. Congressmen from this area - and Senators - began to see things. This ad was mailed to every one of them so they wouldn't miss it. As a matter of fact it was entered in the Congressional Record, I think by (Senator Alan) Cranston; either he or (Congressman) Philip Burton; or maybe they both did.

Ward: Was Cranston a Senator that long ago? It certainly wasn't his predecessor.

LG: No, of course not. (laughter) But I remember the thing being entered in the Congressional Record, so that at least it was offsetting some of this other stuff. It was offsetting this intransigeant position of Meany in the AFL-CIO Executive Council; his success in silencing most of the members of his Executive Council. And I'd say it was the single thing done by the trade union movement that packed weight with these Congressmen.

Ward: Whose thought was that for the ad? Who dreamed it up in the beginning?

LG: It was my idea.

Ward: I thought so. What was Harry's attitude?

LG: Harry went along with the idea, yes. As a matter of fact, I got a lot of these people to move on the ad over the telephone. I took it down to Einar Mohn because I wanted the Teamsters on there and I knew that if Einar Mohn approved it, automatically you would get a lot of the Teamsters to sign. He was a little bit concerned about the wording; he thought maybe it was too sharp, so I told him, "Well, I don't think we can go back and change it, we have so many people who've okayed it already. And if we start doing redrafts, we'll be at it forever and never get a complete consensus on every word." He said, "I can see you're right - it's okay."

LG: And he did succeed in getting a lot of people. A number of Teamsters were on there; these were men who, when their names were read back east, there must have been all kinds of funny reactions. (laughter) What the devil is going on?!

Ward: This is interesting, particularly because there wasn't any redbaiting coming out of this.

LG: A lot of this redbaiting crap kept going on all through the sixties and even into the seventies.

Ward: Well, it was getting a little bit old by this time, wasn't it?

LG: Yes, but, for example, there had been a conspiracy case against the officers of the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers charging that they had conspired to sign the non-Communist affidavits falsely. That was thrown out by the Supreme Court in 1969 or 1970. And during the early part of the Vietnam fracas, I don't have to tell you how violent the redbaiting was.

Ward: But as far as you were concerned, you got this idea, and if you had ever been in any way influenced by the Communist party that had long since passed.

LG: I'm not sure what you mean there.

Ward: Could you say that long since you had done your own thinking, and if the party happened to agree that was fine?

LG: Oh, I'm sure that as far as the party was concerned, they would think it was one hell of an ad.

Ward: I would think so, but it didn't originate with them, it was with you?

LG: That's right. You see, people like Phyllis Mitchell, a careful official and head of the Office Workers Union, Local 3; and Susan Modell, vice-president of the American Federation of Teachers - we had a lot of teachers on there - Einar Mohn, head of the Western Conference of Teamsters; Lou Celaya of the Office Employees, Local 29.

LG: The mix here is fantastic. The ad is worth reading, if for no other reason than to see how potentially effective the trade union movement can be on key issues of this sort, if they just get off their ass and do things.

I'd say some of these guys might have had a bit of trepidation but afterwards, heck, they were all proud of it. It made points. And if anybody wants to share the credit, that's fine. I just wanted to show you that ad. I think it was the high point of the ILWU in a consistent policy of being more than just a bread and butter union.

Ward: That's what St. Sure said about you. That you were more than a bread and butter trade unionist.

LG: Yes, but that was true of the union as a whole. As a matter of fact, if you look at The Dispatcher, there are certain things that show up as consistent issues. The question of relationships with the Soviet Union, problems of the atomic bomb and in support of the Stockholm Petition, having people like Linus Pauling at our convention, getting people like Morse and Greuning, the only two men who stood up against the Tonkin Gulf resolution, a consistent policy on the recognition of China, the importance of establishing formal relations and trade with China. There was no backing away on these issues.

Ward: In World War II, wasn't the ILWU interested in the opening of the Second Front? That would have been a progressive position at that time.

LG: Yes, as a matter of fact, I think that was used later on as one of the examples given these committees that were set up to conduct these so-called trials resulting in expulsion from the CIO; the parallelism theory. Here was the Communist party position and here was the ILWU position. What was deliberately omitted were the positions that were either not the same, or where we might have taken a position long before anybody else took a position.

Ward: Well, we hadn't mentioned the Second Front before, and that's part of it.

LG: That's right; among other things, we were in favor of that.

Ward: I suppose that is one of the reasons why the ILWU was accused of parallelism?

LG: I think so. There's something of a fine feeling in picking up the paper and reading that ad. I'm sure most everybody in the unions around here read it.

More Internal Friction

LG: However, we had internal difficulties, particularly the friction that developed for reasons I never could figure out. I mean, like the Warehouse row in 1970 which made no sense at all, and Harry's attitude on Jack Hall.

Ward: Could I ask a question? People remark every now and then that at one stage of the difficulties between Harry and Jack Hall, Harry openly redbaited the guy. This is a prevalent story in some circles around the west coast.

LG: I'm not personally aware of it. No, Harry did something else.

Ward: The allegation that he scabbed?

LG: Which of course most of us would take far more seriously than any charge of redbaiting. Just being redbaited, well, most of us were pretty well used to that. I never felt it was a great dishonor being thrown out of England or refused admission to Japan.

There's no question that the clashes inside Longshore between some of the leadership and the leftwing did get to be pretty intense, particularly around the mechanization program. Archie Brown was very outspoken against it and fought it violently. As a matter of fact, I understand that - I haven't seen it - there's an article in Political Affairs (a Communist publication) this year by Archie Brown, and what's his name, the man who is the head of the CP here now?

Ward: Mickey Lima?

LG: Yes, Mickey Lima; that there's a piece in Political Affairs attacking the agreement signed in 1978, so that has been a running battle and I'm sure that at times it took the form of something closely resembling redbaiting. That invariably happens when an individual has taken a position that is unpopular and somebody else wants to make points against him; if he figures redbaiting is going to help him, he just chucks it in; I'd say that these are aberrations; they are things that happen involving personalities; some of it is just the geriatrics of organizations.

Ward: Well, after '71 Jack Hall was dead; Harry lost an antagonist. No point hating a dead man.

LG: No, although whether that stopped him from peddling that stuff about Jack's scabbing in 1934 I don't know.

Ward: Well, Harry played some role in '73 and '74 in Hawaii which may have been a backlash of this antagonism towards Jack Hall, wasn't it?

LG: I don't know. It could be that there just was an accumulation of things. In '68 I recall the settlement we worked out in the case of the newspapers; Harry being very laudatory about it, and particularly about the job I had done. In 1970 in Warehouse we got into this crazy roundy-go-roundy, including him making bets against his own team, which is an odd way of supporting it. In the fall of 1970 I was assigned by our International Executive Board to go down to Hawaii on the hotel strike, which had dragged along for some three or four months.

Ward: How did that work out?

LG: Harry suddenly appeared there, no "Hello", "Good morning", "Kiss my ass"; no sitting down and saying, "Okay, how are things going?" Yet, when the agreement was made, again, he was very flattering about the job I had done in working out a solution.

All I can do is grapple for answers; sometimes you find them and sometimes you don't. It could very well be that Harry came down there because he

LG: had no use for Eddie Tangen. Jack Hall was the one who insisted on bringing Eddie Tangen into Hawaii. Even Bob Robertson was opposed to it. But Jack wanted somebody who could tackle the hotels and knew something about them. He figured Eddie Tangen was available and he brought Eddie down and Eddie did a good job.

I think in the strike there were some mistakes made, but they weren't the kind that were going to be fatal if you grabbed hold of them soon enough and began to wrestle them into shape. So that there was, oh, this peculiar sort of thing going on. No question, Harry wasn't fond of Jack and he figured that Jack was a supporter of mine and I was a personal friend of Jack's, which I was. I made no bones about that.

Ward: Now what year was it that Harry tried to push the age 63 thing?

LG: That was in 1971.

The 1974 Sugar Strike

LG: Now, something happened in '73 - '74 in Hawaii. In '74 in Hawaii, the sugar contract was open. After Jack died, George Martin took his place, but he was not in a position to take on the same kind of duties as Jack Hall.

Jack, when he decided to run for vice-president, met with the officers down there and took the position that he would recommend whomever the guys agreed to succeed him. Well, after some internal politicking and discussion, they finally agreed on Bob McElrath, who had been down there a long time and very good, an excellent record as a union man. He'd been one of the earliest members and one of the earliest on our staff in Hawaii; put out the radio program and was quite competent.

Ward: Let's see, McElrath was the guy who tuned in on the FBI.

LG: The FBI propositioned Dave Thompson to go to Jack Hall, and Bob was the one who planted the mike and sat in the basement down below recording.

Ward: So, they got Bob McElrath.

LG: They got Bob McElrath. Bob used to make the crack every once in a while, "I'm the regional director nobody wanted."

Ward: He still is, isn't he?

LG: No. Bob retired and his place has been taken by a very bright guy, a local boy - Tommy Trask. And Tommy Trask comes out of pineapple, used to work at the Dole Pineapple Cannery -

Ward: That's a haole name.

LG: It's a haole name, but he's a hapahaole - part Hawaiian. The Trask family is a big family in the Islands. I'm sure that the Trask name is probably a haole name, but then again you find many haole names among the Hawaiians. Tommy is a good man for the job, a very hard worker and he picks up quickly.

But the difficulty was that after Jack died, I found myself with more and more of a load insofar as Hawaii was concerned. I had begun to phase out of the thing and Jack had begun to take over a lot of the duties. But Jack died and I found myself down there for both the sugar and pineapple negotiations.

Ward: And the hotel . . . .?

LG: And the hotel strike as well. I don't recall taking part in any hotel negotiations after that. Since then hotel negotiations have been pretty smooth and on a constructive level. I was down in Hawaii in '74; the sugar agreement was open; negotiations ran into a complete deadlock with the employers. We weren't getting anywhere, although it wasn't as though we had any overwhelming demands.

We finally had a strike in '74. Well, I forget how long the strike lasted - five, six or seven weeks. A medium long strike, but seen in the

LG: light of some other strikes we've had down there, it was short. Some interesting things happened. During that strike, Harry came down there, but did not spend much time in Honolulu talking to the committee. He decided that he would go out directly to the plantations, in every place making a strong pitch in support of the strike and taking a very logical position that with sugar it was like having gold in the ground; it wasn't a damn bit of good to the employers until they got it out, until you harvested that sugar and ground it and sold it. Without the sugar workers back at work, there was just no chance of getting that gold.

It was a good position. He also made some statements that he had never seen a better organized strike in his life. Those guys were doing a good job on organizing in the traditions of 1946, which still carried over. These units in every community set up the most elaborate kind of machinery, even though it was simple, in the sense that everybody has an assignment, very detailed, because it ranges all the way from picketing to publicity, transportation committees, growing your own vegetables, hunting, fishing, soup kitchens, going out and working out deals with small farmers; if they could pick up stray cows for the farmer who had lost them, then they would get one cow.

All these things, as well as taking care of matters such as what happens to the school lunches for the kids. Harry stayed a while there and then he returned to the mainland. Around two weeks after that the employers began to fold and we reached what we felt was a pretty good agreement.

The price of sugar was moving up, incidentally. '74 was when sugar reached a fantastically high price, but that came later in the year. The price of sugar moving up must have had some bearing on the employers willingness to settle. But after we announced the settlement, Harry came down; so did Chester, so did George Martin - all three of them. Harry came down with a long pitch that the settlement ought to be dumped. This was an interesting business of what you call "turning your left end."

Ward: Was this after you ratified the agreement?

LG: No, we hadn't ratified the agreement; we held it up, as I recall, and notified Harry that if that's how he felt about it, he should come down there and talk to the workers.

Well, unbeknownst to me, one of the two guys who went out to meet him at the airport was Herbert Vierra, from the HC&S (Hawaiian Commercial and Sugar Company) plantation on Maui, the big one. A very outspoken guy and also a little bit of a demogogue, the self-appointed protector of the underdog as against the craftsman. He and Constantine Samson, vice-president of Local 142, an old, old friend of Harry's, went out to the airport to pick him up.

Completely unbeknownst to me, they spent all their time on the trip back to the union building from the airport telling Harry not to buck the agreement; that the guys thought it was a good agreement; that it was worthwhile and ought to be taken. So Harry first met among the officers when he got there. Chester, the self-appointed mediator, was trying to tell me, "Why don't you simply tell the employers that we're reconsidering, not turning it down - we simply want to reopen it."

I said, "I don't work that way; if you want to turn it down, just turn it down clean; if you want to repudiate, repudiate it; that's okay, doesn't bother me. I'll step out and you have somebody else step in. But none of this flim-flam. My name isn't Rutledge and I don't play those kinds of games."

So Chester was getting no place with me. Harry had a long string of notes; according to Martin he was going over these notes on the trip down here; George finally escaped it by getting a set of earphones and watching the movie. We had picked up something like 75 cents in wage increases over the two years.

Ward: Seventy-five cents an hour?

LG: Yes, in increases over the two years - a fairly healthy increase in sugar, particularly when you look into the background. Bear in mind, we'd gone through some rough days in sugar. As a matter of

LG: fact, in the 1971 convention, Kohala had announced they were going to liquidate and they tried to pull that plantation out of sugar bargaining. When I spoke at the convention I said that as far as we were concerned, those workers had to be taken care of; we were not going to permit Kohala to pull out of negotiations.

We were going to make provision for these people in terms of their housing and locate them in other jobs. I used the expression there which the employers kept repeating, thinking it would be embarrassing to me - which it wasn't. I said, "We are going to hold the industry hostage until Kohala is settled." We finally worked out a fairly good deal for Kohala.

I guess it was in the '72 negotiations when they were taking the plantation on the island of Kauai and splitting it up between two adjoining plantations, owned by different agencies, American Factors - that is Lihue - Alexander Baldwin - that was McBride. There again, we took a position that until every one of those workers is taken care of, we'd get no place in these negotiations.

Ward: What's the name of this outfit?

LG: Grove Farm. We took care of every single person as to where he would move: depending on what was closest; if he wanted to take early retirement or special retirement, he would get substantial severance pay. By the time we got through, every worker on that plantation had been completely protected in terms of seniority, pension rights, vacation, sick leave, you name it.

So, we were doing a pretty good job there, and in '74 we felt we were entitled to a hunk of dough which we finally did get. But Harry decided to buck it; he was on one of those kicks where the only way to describe it was that he was going to turn the left end of the committee.

It was the best strike he had ever seen, nothing better organized. But, the employers had a lot more money around, the price of sugar would go up indefinitely and so forth and so on. I decided I wasn't going to get into any big argument; let him bounce it off the committee.

LG: Anyway, by the time he talked to the officers there, the full negotiating committee had been called in; this being the representatives from all the plantations. That usually makes up about 75 to 100 people, whereas the working committee has about ten or twelve, something like that. The full committee was there, and when all the palaver was over, Harry went along with the agreement.

As a matter of fact, the next day when the ratification vote began, he went out to Waipahu, one of the plantations close by Honolulu, and - they were dedicating a little hall they had just fixed up - he spoke of the fine agreement, one of the best ever in sugar. This was after all his arguments that the thing ought to be dumped. Well, that's only part of the '74 chapter; that was a two year agreement; it covered '74 and '75 and came open again in 1976.

Well, the price of sugar kept climbing. Sporadic things happen in the sugar market. Economists have done a lot of work in this area, and sugar is an inflexible commodity. If there's a shortage of 10 percent in sugar, the price doesn't just go up by 10 percent; there's a constant bidding for that sugar, and it's bid up by a good deal more than 10 percent. In the same way, if there's a ten percent surplus, it doesn't result in merely a ten percent drop in the price of sugar. That surplus is constantly being offered on the market and it drives the whole market down. A lot of it has to do with the crazy economics of the sugar industry.

Ward: Well, okay, so it was going up and up.

LG: Yes; so comes September of that year - the strike was in February and ended up sometime in March, April - and I decided to get some vacation time. This was in 1974 and I found that I needed more vacation time, particularly after the heart surgery in 1972 -

Ward: Oh, that's right, we haven't discussed that yet.

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XXXIV THE $28,000,000 POKER GAME

But First, Open Heart Surgery

Ward: Your heart surgery took place about when?

LG: November 27, 1972. It was Terry's birthday when I went in there and the surgery took place the next day. It was done by Dr. Norman Shumway down at Stanford.

Ward: You had a valve and a by-pass?

LG: Yes, they had to put in an aortic valve. I knew I had a bad valve because of a doctor who was a very good heart specialist; I suppose he's the successor of Paul Dudley White in terms of standing in the profession.

Ward: A friend of yours from Boston?

LG: Boston, yes; he's the one who invented the cardiovator.

Ward: And he had been treating you for heart problems for quite a long time?

LG: He was out here at some convention, and Asher (Dr. Asher Gordon) had been looking at me. I wasn't feeling well; he decided that I had a heart murmur and he wasn't sure what was causing it. And he asked me if I would come down to his office on Sunday and I said, "Sure, if you want to work on Sunday." And he said, "Well, I think that's the only time I can get this friend of mine to look at you."

LG: This man came down to Asher's office; a modest little fellow, a very good man, born in Lithuania; came over here at the age of 14 or 15.

Ward: I see, so you had something in common right there.

LG: Yes. He studied me for a long time and later on he ordered a lot of X-rays and he reached the conclusion that I had an aortic stenosis. He asked a lot of questions about whether I had many earaches when I was a kid, which I did. Apparently this is one of the signs of rheumatic fever, which I guess, when I was a kid, they didn't know much about. What you did was go to bed for a few days.

I recall doctors coming in to puncture the ear drum and drain it. Apparently it was rheumatic fever, and one of the by-products of rheumatic fever is permanent damage to the aortic valve, unless there is complete rest. Now, they know how to treat it . . . .

Ward: And you hadn't had much rest for many years?

LG: No. He said there was no question that I had had it; the thing to do was to put off the surgery as long as possible, but not too long - then they just pick you up off the floor. He kept track of me whenever he came out here, or if I happened to be in the east, I would stop by to see him. A wonderful guy and a real friend. To this day I've never had a bill from him.

Well, anyway, I had the surgery. As a matter of fact, I refused to go into the surgery until the doctors at Kaiser checked with Bernard Lown, this doctor in Boston. By that time they had taken an angiogram and all that and they sent some of that stuff back to him to look at.

I was at Kaiser because they thought I was about to have another attack. He finally called me at Kaiser and said, "Look, if you can have the thing done tomorrow, do it at once. The longer you wait, the more difficult it's going to become. I don't think your general physical condition would be better when you finally have to have it." So, I worked things out with Kaiser that if I could go home for Thanksgiving, I'd come down to Stanford the next day. So, that's when it was done; Shumway did a good job.

Ward: How long were you off work?

LG: I was off work from the end of November, December, January and February - three months; although I was advised to take six months.

Ward: I would think so, particularly that you developed pneumonia.

LG: Yes, the pneumonia I got after the surgery. I guess I was pretty well knocked out by all the drugs they use; they used tremendous dosages of valium and everything else under the sun. I remember being moved from Stanford by ambulance and looking out the window and saying to myself, "There's something fishy about this," because there's snow all over the ground. It was that winter when they had that heavy snowfall.

Ward: You thought you were hallucinating?

LG: Yeah and later on I did hallucinate pretty badly. It could be that en route I picked up the pneumonia because they put me in intensive care in Kaiser; my temperature began to rise out of sight. They sure did a competent job of bringing it down in a hurry, but the combination of the drugs they used did make me a bit whacky.

I remember talking to the nurse one evening. I thought I was being completely rational and I said, "Why does the hospital keep moving every day?" She said, "Really, where has it been?" I said, "Well, yesterday it was around Redwood City, as I remember, and now you're up to South San Francisco; why doesn't the hospital stay in one place?"

So, pretty soon she had somebody up there with a white coat who wanted to take all kinds of tests including electrodes, encephalograms, but there was nothing wrong, really. Just crazy hallucinations. They told me I should take six months off. They figured it would be three months to heal and most of the time I would have to spend on my back. I lost an enormous amount of weight. By the time I went in for surgery, I had gone down to about 140 pounds.

Ward: That would be very light for you.

LG: Yes, very light. I was skin and bones even though I was eating five or six meals a day. But I should have taken another three months after that, to begin to exercise, and get the system back in shape. You have this funny feeling that the moment you walk you're going to tear the whole thing apart.

Ward: I know that feeling very well. Why did you go back after three months instead of waiting out the six months? Was there any pressure for you to go back?

LG: Well, there are two reasons I went back, really. One, the Local 6 convention took place in March . . .

Ward: And you just couldn't stay away?

LG: Yes, that was in 1973; the negotiations also took place in that year, so it was an important convention where they would formulate their demands. That was one reason.

The other was that the International convention would be taking place somewhere around mid-April or early May. A certain amount of work had to be done for that. And I guess part of it is also psychological, because if I didn't go back to work I'd be throwing in the towel. I guess those are psychological things; there's no way to explain them other than that you're going to fight your way out of it.

Ward: Were people calling you up and asking you questions. When are you coming back; can you do this or that?

LG: Oh, people were very nice to me. Most were just get well letters and notes, some signed by whole warehouses; things like that; and chipping in and buying gifts - a television for me. Nobody was trying to put any pressure on me. But I thought I should get back, which I did.

Ward: Well, all right. So we get back to 1974, after the sugar negotiations; you wanted to take a little vacation.

LG: Right.

Ward: Because you damn well needed one?

LG: Correct. What was going on in Harry's head, I don't know. For the entire time I was in the hospital or at home afterwards he never called me, which wasn't surprising. He called once, before I had surgery, not to talk to me but to talk to my doctor to ask how I was. My doctor was fairly shrewd and said to him, "He's really fine." I think Harry was getting ready to make an appointment. Things were going on.

Ward: Oh, he was thinking in terms of a successor to you?

LG: Oh, yes. While I was recuperating one day Newton Miyagi came by from Hawaii; Ernie Arena drove him over, and just out of the blue, he says, "Look, Lou, I just want to make it perfectly plain I have no intention of running against you or anything like that. At one time, they were talking about me when they thought you wouldn't be able to come back." So, obviously, the shopping was already going on. Newton was just going out of his way, and I think . . . .

Ward: Just tipping you off?

LG: No, I think he was perfectly pleasant about the whole thing. As far as I was concerned, he was a supporter of mine. He wasn't all the time - I knew that; but he was telling me what was going on. It doesn't take any brilliant mathematics to figure out what was going on; one and one adds up to two, and no more. That's just one of the side things.

Back to '74. In September of '74, Terry and I decided we would take some vacation time in Hawaii. Once before we had taken a bit of a vacation in Hawaii and that was when we stayed with the (Sook) Moons over in Punaluu.

This time we got a small condominium out past Lahaina on the island of Maui, right on the beach. It was an attractive place, a good place to rest; the only problem there was that you couldn't walk all the way along the beach because of rocks and things, so that when I wanted to do some walking, I'd do it on the road. Almost every time I'd be

LG: walking along the road some guy would stop and say, "Where you going, Lou?" You know, one of our guys, saying "What the hell are you doing - walking?"

An Important Golf Game

LG: While I was there I got a call from Edwin Wong; he had been chairman of the sugar negotiating committee; he said, he understood I was vacationing there; and would I like to play golf. I said, "Sure, I play golf whenever I have a chance." Some of the local guys I knew played golf on their off days. Also, a man I knew who had been with Kaiser Gypsum was living in Maui, so I played with him too. I kept busy playing a round of golf here and there, always borrowing clubs from somebody because I didn't bring any down with me.

Anyway, our Hawaii executive committee is made up of the division directors and the three officers of Local 142 and they were meeting somewhere in Lahaina; Maui Surf, I think it was. They were having their meeting and I stopped by there.

One of the main issues they had was whether or not they endorse Jack Burns; this guy Frank Fasi was running against him. George Martin was down there to make sure there was no endorsement of Fasi. Anyway, that was taken care of all right.

Then I said I'd like to raise a question with them: "I know that we signed an agreement a few months ago after a brief strike; it was a good agreement, overwhelmingly approved, but the price of sugar has been going up steadily."

I said we ought not to tear the agreement up; that would be a mistake, but I did think it would be advisable to tell the employers that we had gone through some rough days in the industry, as well as some good ones, and we now wanted a piece of the action. "We want a hunk of money, and not a turkey at Christmas time, or a ham. We want a substantial piece of money."

LG: I said I didn't think we ought to beg for it; we should simply tell them that they could tell us "No," and that's the end of the conversation. No further argument, but we're going to keep track of how much we think you owe us, and that's going to be the first demand when the contract expires in February of 1976.

The reaction I got was fine. The executive committee said that was great. "Why not ask for a bonus; if we get anything, it's all right." I said, "No, I don't think so; if they offer us some manini little bonus, we'll just tell them to keep it. It has to be either substantial, or forget the whole thing."

They said, "Well, how do you want to handle it?" And I said, "Ed Wong just called and wants to play golf with me. If you guys give me the authority to tell him that if we don't get it, they have themselves an automatic strike, they can know that at least . . . ."

Ward: Now, Ed Wong is one of the guys you told me a who became an employer representative?

LG: Yes, he's a vice president of Alexander Baldwin. And he and Don Nicholson were very close friends. Don Nicholson had a similar position with American Factors. So, to get back, I said, "I'm going to play golf with them; the question is, - if it's okay with you, because I don't want to do any begging; I'm opposed to it - I think we ought to tell them that we're not going to break the contract, but that we have this dough coming. If they say 'No,' that's that."

The executive committee said, "Go ahead, you have our authority." I said, "Well, just remember what I'm telling you. We are in effect telling them that they have an automatic strike unless we get something substantial, as soon as the contract runs out." They said, "Sure, we understand." And I said, "Okay, just so long as it's all understood."

Well, we played golf that day and we took a luncheon break after nine holes. The local pro played with us and I was teamed with him, playing against

LG: Wong and Nicholson. Luckily, I was hitting a fairly decent golf ball that day; most times I don't. Well, we sat down at lunch and I said, "One of the reasons I wanted to play golf was to see the course and the new hotel they had opened in Wailea" - it's a beautiful place - "and because I wanted to raise this question of sugar. I know we finished up a strike, got an agreement and we're bound by the contract, but what we want is a hunk of money; we think we're entitled to it in the form of a bonus, and no manini bonus."

Manini is a Hawaiian word for small; there's a fish called manini, too. I said, "It can't be a manini bonus." So, they thought for a while and said, "We're prepared to discuss that with you; we think you're entitled to a bonus and it won't be manini, it will be substantial. But there has to be some quid pro quo."

Well, the moment they mentioned quid pro quo, I knew exactly what they were talking about; it wasn't the worst thing in the world in terms of giving us leverage. The quid pro quo, as far as they were concerned, was to get an extra year on the contract. That meant that we would be bargaining with considerable additional strength. Anyway, I said, "Okay, we'll meet later in the year." This was September; I went back there again, I guess it was October some time.

We started these discussions on the question of a bonus, and sure enough the quid pro quo emerged at once. There was an offer of $750 a man for 1974 plus another bonus, a smaller amount - they were talking about something like $500 - for the next year. In exchange for that they wanted an extension of the contract for one year.

I said, "You can't buy an extension - forget it; also the money you're talking about is manini." Well, they finally got the thing up to $1,000. And I said, "Okay, that will settle it for the year; give us that and forget everything else." "No, there has to be a quid pro quo." "Look," I said, "you haven't the money to buy it; there isn't that kind of money around."

LG: "What are you talking about?" they said. I said, "Well, the 1975-bonus has to be the same amount as the 1974 bonus - one thousand dollars; but you're going to have to buy the extension. That's separate." Well, they chewed on that one, and chewed on it, and they finally said, "Okay, we will give you $1,000 the first year, $750 the second year and a 25-cent increase and the extension." I said, "Well, give us the $1,000 per sugar worker in 1974 and we'll call it a day."

The Ante Goes Up

LG: It was one of the most interesting poker hands I ever played. So, they finally came to $1,000, $1,000 and 30 cents, something like that. "I was afraid of that," I said. "Well, I didn't think you had enough money to buy it and you don't have it, that's all." But by that time, of course, that additional year was so important to them, and I'm sure they had already convinced their people that this was a quid pro quo they were going to get.

Well, we had the committee in there, of course. The committee felt that two $1,000 bonuses: that's not bad money. They had never seen anything like that on the plantations. I told them I was convinced that there was more money there, and the committee went along. They said, "All right, you came this far and your appraisal was correct; give it a shove, that's all."

So, we met the other side again and I said, "We'll give you the price now; there isn't any purpose in haggling; otherwise let's just break these talks off. Give the guys $1,000 bucks apiece, we'll just shake hands and you'll get that much good will out of it, and just chalk it off to that. It's either that or you're going to pay the money to Uncle Sam in taxes. Or the price will have to be a thousand bucks in '74, another $1,000 in '75, an extension of the contract one year, '76, but with that extension an increase of 50 cents across the board, plus another amount of money - approximately 20 cents - to take care of classification headaches that have to be settled somewhere along the line, and this would be the time to do it."

Ward: So that was 70 cents all told?

LG: Yes, 70 cents.

Ward: For the one year, not for the three?

LG: We already had another wage increase coming in '75.

Ward: All right, when would the 70 cents apply? Just for the third year.

LG: Yes; the contract rates went up. We get a $1,000 bonus each year, '74 and '75 -

Ward: And 70 cents the third year?

LG: Fifty cents across the board and another 20 cents. They finally got to the point where they said, okay, you'll get the $1,000, $1,000 and 50 cents, but that's as far as we can go. I said, "Okay, then we'll just call it a day and chalk the whole thing up to experience, wish each other a Happy New Year and see you another time." No, they didn't want to break it off.

Finally, the two of them went out and huddled, came back and said, "All right, we'll give you the fifty cents plus a dime for the classifications." You can do an awful lot with a dime because a dime for all the workers as a lump sum can then be applied to classification corrections for some workers. In other words, if it's a top labor grade you might apply 60 cents, and the lowest labor grade, nothing. So that a dime an hour can go an awfully long way for classification adjustments.

Our committee had some sort of a luncheon prepared and said, "Do you want to go to lunch?" I said, "No, we want to huddle." The committee said, "Look, if you can get more, fine; but don't let go what you got. If that is as far as they'll go, $1,000 - $1,000 and 50 cents, and 10 cents, don't let it go."

The employers asked if I was going to lunch with the committee and I said, "No." They said, "We'd just as soon talk to you; how can we settle this?" And I said, "Well, give us the 20 cents and settle, that's all." Finally, I said, "Well, make it 15 cents and you have a bargain."

LG: That was it; we wound up with this hunk of dough that ran to twenty-eight, twenty-nine million dollars when you added the whole thing up. And as I was telling a friend of mine, Kuni Arakaki, a guy who loved poker - he was talking about my retirement - and he said, "Gee, Lou, you shouldn't retire - we had good results in sugar, you know, you've been with us all the time." And I said, "Look, can you think of a better way of retiring than having a chance of playing one hand of poker for $28,000,000?" Anyway, the deal went back to the rank and file and was warmly accepted.

Ward: I would think so.

LG: We had to do a lot of juggling so as to give each man $1,000 because apparently there's something in the law there about the application of bonuses that relate to your wages, you see. So, if somebody makes more money, he gets more of a bonus. And we wanted no part of that. We wanted each worker, no matter where he was - Labor Grade 1 in the field, or the First Grade Mechanic - to get the same amount of dough.

There were a few little squawks about that, but not much. They had to work out a whole series of brackets. They worked the thing out and they all got the thousand bucks and it worked out okay for the next year.

Bridges Rocks The Boat

LG: I thought that would end it. Instead we called the full sugar committee, telling them the results of the negotiations - by that time they knew the negotiations were going on because the guys had been going back to the plantations and reporting. Harry gets on the phone and says, "The thing ought to be dumped; it's a cheap deal. The price of sugar is way up there and it's going to go higher yet. There's a hell of a lot more money than that around."

Ward: He was calling from San Francisco?

LG: Yes. So, I put Carl Demaso on the phone. I said, "Carl, you talk to Harry; he doesn't apparently put much stock in what I'm saying." Harry went round-and-round with Carl. Carl said, "Look, Harry, you keep telling me these things; are you prepared to give me a guarantee that the price is going to go up? Or that it's going to stay up? We know what's happened in sugar all these previous years; all these crazy fluctuations."

Harry says, "Well, I'm just sure of it - that's all." Finally, Carl got to the point and said, "Look, Harry, we can't go on this way over the phone; we'll hold the caucus over for a day. You come on down and present your position." Harry says, "No, I can't - I'm too tied up with things here; I'll send a letter instead."

Carl said, "Okay, we'll wait for the letter; get it off at once, and we'll report back the conversation exactly as we can recall it." We reported back the whole thing to the committee; then, when his letter got there, we read the letter off. I guess it's one letter he wishes he had never written because every single one of his prognostications turned out to be completely wrong.

Ward: Sugar went down, huh?

LG: By 1976, when we got that additional extension, sugar prices just slid. They slid down in '75, and kept going down in '76. By the end of '76, the farmers and everybody were screaming their heads off about sugar supports and everything else.

This was just one of those crazy things with Harry. All I could figure out, at that stage of the game, was that he had reached a frame of mind that no matter what I did, it had to be wrong.

Ward: Also, you know Harry's reputation as a poker player?

LG: No, I don't.

Ward: He's a consistent loser.

LG: That could be.

Ward: You ought to talk to the guys in the San Francisco Press Club about the game he had with them during the Landis hearing. They took him.

LG: But it doesn't quite end there. In the 1977 convention, in Seattle, when Harry and I and others were retiring, we drafted an officers' report; in it one of the things that was reported, of course, was what happened in sugar; not only what happened on the strike, but also what happened on the contract extension, the amount of dough we got for it and the two bonuses.

We had had some headaches in between the contract extension and this report, and again, caused by this funny game Harry was playing with Vierra. It also backfired on Harry.

Vierra kept saying that after we got the 50 cents and the 15 - which I made plain, and the committee understood it that the 15 was to be used on classifications - Vierra, who had become sort of self-appointed guardian of the interests of the lower paid workers, said, "Look, if they don't like it in the mill there where they're working, they can get out in a hot field like me too, you know." He worked a roto-tiller, something like that. He demanded, "The 15 cents ought to be across the board."

I knew there had to be a showdown on the goddam thing; of all things, Harry decides to have the union pay Vierra's way over to San Francisco. Newton Miyagi comes along to try to convince Vierra to change his mind. Vierra is not going to change his mind; why should he? He figures that he's got himself a hot issue going; he got himself a free trip.

We know perfectly well how a guy like that handles a situation of that sort. When he gets back, he becomes more of a hero. "You know what they did? They paid my way all the way to San Francisco to try to make me change my mind - and I don't change my mind; when I'm with the rank and file, I'm with the rank and file." Well, we were able to finally get that fifteen cents worked out so that the least that any worker got was 9-½ cents across the board, and then the balance of

LG: the money was used for adjustments in some of the upper labor grades. This was after a Local 142 convention in 1975, because we had to make a determination. The union could do whatever it wanted with the 15 cents - either use it entirely for classifications, entirely across the board, or any mixture thereof. It was entirely up to us.

Harry was down there for this convention and so was I; we had to make a decision as to what we were going to recommend at the sugar caucus which met after the convention on the classification thing. I had worked out the formula pretty well, in terms of spreading it around from 9-½ cents on the bottom to some big increases at the top. Vierra hadn't changed his tune a bit. Harry, instead of supporting all the officers there, waffled around; he wasn't going to fight Vierra.

That's the closest I came to just walking out of the meeting. I had all the stuff in my brief case; I finally slammed the brief case shut and picked it up, and then realized I had better sit down. Let the guys handle it. And they sure did; it went through the caucus okay.

The only plantation on which they said the vote went against it was at HC&S. Apparently what Vierra did - it was a small meeting hall - all of his supporters in the lower labor grades got there first and the craftsmen were outside, so they didn't have a chance to vote. The only question he put to the membership there was "All those in favor of having the 15 cents across the board, say 'Yes'."

On the rest of the plantations it was a godsend, because some of those classifications were just getting too far out of line with the wages in town. Sure, they are not going to get paid the same as the building craftsmen, although some of our men are just as good. In year-round jobs you have all kinds of benefits.

Anyway, back to the 1977 convention report. When we reported on the sugar thing, Harry inserted a note there, "I dissent." Well, the officers' report goes before the officers' report committee, which is a big committee. In our convention all

LG: delegates are assigned to a committee. But a lot more than the committee were there; apparently they figured there were going to be fireworks.

For some reason or other, the sugar guys figured that I was not going to say a word because I was sick and tired of the whole thing. They had lined up a whole group of their own speakers. At the last minute, Chester came to me and said, "Don't make an issue of this sugar thing; Harry's not going to say anything; it'll just die, and the officers' report will be accepted." I said, "Well, that's okay with me. I don't give a damn. I'd rather see the convention unified and kept that way."

But that didn't happen; Harry took the deck and went on and on, trying to tear apart the whole agreement. Then we had a break for dinner, and came back in, so I told the sugar guys, "I don't know if you have any guys planned to speak, but I intend to talk." They let me have the floor first. So, we just had a first class shoot-out, that's all.

I went over the whole background, and particularly hammered away on this question of whether or not the workers in Hawaii had the right to make their own decisions. What did all this autonomy mean? Including these constant statements we made that the workers even had the right to be wrong. Where had we ever violated the principles of the membership taking part in ratifying any agreement and having the committees to do the negotiating? Keeping in constant touch with people - no back door deals?

It was unanswerable. The longshoremen were sitting there too, and they were just shaking their heads. Some one told me afterwards, "He better not fuck around like that in Longshore"; they wouldn't stand for it, you see. They had this long history.

I gave the committee a view of the economic facts of life and said, "We're just damn lucky the sugar contract isn't open right now." As a matter of fact when the contract opened up in 1977 the price of sugar was very low and the Sugar Act had been allowed to expire. There was no Sugar Act.

LG: We found ourselves in the position where we had to extend the contract as is for six months, to a November date. I had promised the members in Hawaii that I would hang with the sugar thing until we saw it through.

I had to spend August back there in Washington, because they were talking of certain sugar legislation that was so designed that the one part of the industry that is organized, Hawaii, would take a kick in the ass. And the other parts of the industry would get the benefits of the legislation they were talking about. It was all a by-product of the terrific in-fighting within the industry itself, a cat-and-dog industry. We got the results we wanted back there with the help of (Congressman) Phil Burton and the progressive caucus.

Ward: Well, what did the convention do?

LG: The convention? Oh, the delegates supported the officers' report the way it was written.

Ward: And rejected the dissent?

LG: Oh, sure.

Ward: I see. Do you want to say anything further on sugar in Hawaii in '77?

LG: No, that was my last go-around. Actually, I was officially retired somewhere around May -

Ward: Both of you were?

LG: That's right; this confrontation took place in May or whenever the convention was held. I will say one thing; the guys from sugar did themselves really proud. They had their facts marshalled; they knew what they were going to talk about.

Then we finally got these results out of Washington which took Hawaii off the hook in many respects. It was nothing like the sugar price they wanted, but if some of the amendments had gone through that were being pushed by people - I forget the names - Hawaii would have been cut out of potentially perhaps $60 to $80 million dollars in sugar subsidies.

LG: We defeated that. We went back into negotiations with the employers then; they tried the technique once again of so-called distressed plantations. They claimed that three of the plantations, notwithstanding all we had done, were still in bad shape --

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(Interview 38: 12 December 1978)

The Political Economics Of Sugar

Ward: I believe you want to talk further on sugar.

LG: Yes, there is one aspect of sugar that should be cleaned up, even though it culminated after I was no longer officially an officer of the ILWU.

The contract we negotiated in 1974 was for two years through '75; we extended it for one year; that means it ran through February, 1977. By that time a couple of things had happened. The Sugar Act under which the industry had been operating for umpty-nine years, as far back as the Roosevelt Administration in the '30s, was originally called the Jones-Costigan Act. I think primarily as a gut reaction, or consumer reaction, all of which was warranted, Congress wiped the Act out, refused to extend it any further, when it came up for renewal in 1974. There was no Sugar Act, as such, around.

In effect, the U. S. became a general open market for sugar. The concept of quotas and everything else went out the window. This action of Congress, in my opinion, was completely understandable because sugar prices had soared. Also, one of the fundamental difficulties with the Sugar Act was that it did a certain service for the growers but gave only lip service to the workers, who were supposed to be treated fairly and be given their fair and reasonable wages.

Time and time again we appeared at hearings around the Sugar Act and got no place with this special division of the Department of Agriculture

LG: which had this responsibility for the wage determination. Well, it did make a change in the case of Louisiana wages.

The main thing we accomplished was to knock off their hearings in Hawaii, because those were just junkets; whatever the boss chose to pay was right. For example, it was "fair and reasonable" to pay wages of 33 and 1/3 cents an hour in Puerto Rico. The Sugar Act was really a meaningless piece of legislation, as far as the workers were concerned.

But it did accomplish something for the growers, and for the bulk of industrial users who were dependent on the industry in terms of having a continuous flow of supplies for a certain price. I'm talking about outfits like American Sugar, many of whom had holdings at one time in Cuba. These holdings went out the window with the coming of Castro.

While the Sugar Act provided a floor under prices, which was their primary concern, there actually was no provision in the Act about any kind of a ceiling; the sky was the limit, if they could get away with it. Consequently, because of a whole series of international factors, the prices did soar in 1974 and the reaction of Congress was to knock off the Sugar Act. It is interesting to note that I think we had the only group of sugar workers anywhere in the world who got any benefit at all out of this enormous price windfall.

There were also some damn interesting things that happened later on and which contributed to the price collapse. Some governments and the employers are alter egos, one and the same people; the Philippines, a substantial sugar grower, is a good example. There they had (President Ferdinand) Marcos declare some sort of a national emergency and seize the sugar crop in the national interest.

Nobody could figure out what he was talking about, but everybody knew what he was after. He wanted to breach a number of contracts where interests in the Philippines had sold sugar in advance at a certain price; in other words, selling futures. A lot of industrial users will buy sugar as long as six months or more ahead of time for delivery at a certain fixed price. Marcos decided

LG: these were to be breached; then buyers had to deal with the government.

Ward: He was able to take advantage of the price rise?

LG: And plus, he got too greedy. So greedy, as a matter of fact, that he began to hold back sugar because he thought the price was going up still more. The net result was that the Philippines were left with a backlog, an inventory somewhere in the neighborhood of 250 thousand tons of sugar. Then they had to start dumping it on the market.

Beginning around 1976, and particularly in 1977, they were selling sugar every which way, under the table, over the table, on the market. The Philippines, as I recall, made arrangements with a big outfit called Godchaux-Henderson. That's a mill in Texas. There the arrangement was that they simply turn the sugar over to the company, the company refine the sugar, package it and sell it; and then give the Philippine owners their net return.

You could imagine what the situation was when an outfit like Henderson goes on the market with that sugar. They've gotten their money out of it in terms of the refining costs, what we term the "laundering" costs. Really, that's all the refining operation is, processing and making the sugar white. They don't give a good goddam whether the net return to the Philippine grower is two cents, ten cents or whatever.

The market was in complete havoc, where there were all kinds of demands for action. A special international trade commission that has to deal with these things made an appearance in San Francisco. There was a very large attendance from farmers in Hawaii; a lot of independent growers. There still are many independent growers in the Islands, including sons of our members.

The employers, of course, were out in force. We appeared too, and other people like the Louisiana growers and others were there. That led to some sharp altercations about the whole business of the nature of sugar. A group that I recall was particularly noisy, just wanted things to be let alone.

LG: As long as the price is low, the industrial user can see nothing but benefits to him. If he can keep buying that raw material at the lowest possible price, he doesn't give a damn where it comes from.

I recall they were after me, asking what did I know about the confectionary industry; bakery and confectionary is their group, I think. I said that I didn't know anything about them. I wouldn't recognize them if they were in bed with me. All I did know was that when the price of sugar was jumping, they'd raise candy bars from a dime to twenty cents apiece. Now that sugar was way down in price, I didn't see any reduction in the price of a candy bar. That was enough for me to know, because since then they've gone up to 25 cents.

I notice that Carter and this ingenious economic advisor in that brilliant coterie he has, have figured out that based on their guide lines and also by the use of contorted manipulations of the famous machine that was concave and convex, that 25 cents was their right price.

The legislation that appeared in Washington was an attempt to put some sort of a minimal floor under the price of sugar by subsidy payment directly from the government to the domestic grower, or in the case of off-shore sugar by a combination of tariff and import quotas; primarily by tariffs. Whoever drafted this legislation was also neck deep in the internal political fight within the sugar industry. The sugar industry is not a homogenous or harmonious group. They battle like cats and dogs in the market.

Ward: Even in Hawaii?

LG: Not in Hawaii because there is no way for them to compete in Hawaii. If Hawaii had to depend upon the people in Hawaii consuming the sugar they produce, you could buy back the industry tomorrow and they would be all right. Just leave one small plantation; the total consumption in Hawaii is somewhere in the neighborhood of 60 thousand, maybe 65 thousand tons of sugar.

The amount of sugar they turn out in Hawaii exceeds a million tons, so of course the vast bulk of the sugar is processed and marketed mostly on

LG: the west coast, which is their main market. Then you have the big conflict market around the mid-west, what they call the Chicago market. That's where they run head-on into each other: beet sugar, Louisiana cane sugar, Puerto Rican sugar that comes through from New York refineries, and particularly the big beet sugar interests, they all come into clash in the Chicago market.

Ward: Where does your Philippine sugar go mostly?

LG: The Philippine sugar in the main would be sold to the refineries in the Gulf of Mexico. They don't have any sugar refineries on the west coast any more, other than the one at C&H. They did have one years ago in San Francisco, Western Sugar, which we had organized, but that was bought by C&H, primarily for the purpose of liquidation. The mill was completely antiquated anyway; the only thing that held the plant together was the pipes. It was the place that George Valter came from.

Whoever devised the proposed new legislation put in an interesting kicker, that in the interest of saving the American consumer and the fact that farm legislation should concern itself with the small farmer's welfare rather than the big farmer, any kind of federal assistance, either by purchase forms or loans, be confined to those employers who grew up to 50,000 dollars' worth of sugar; in other words that would be the ceiling on any payment to any one company.

If you're talking about the beet sugar industry that's not unreasonable, because even a good sized beet farm won't produce much more than 50 thousand dollars' worth. In the case of Louisiana where you still have a good many small farmers, pretty much the same would apply. I don't know whether it applies to Florida.

The only outfit that would get really hurt, and it was obviously designed for that purpose, was the Hawaii interests, because the average plantation there produced more than 50 thousand dollars' worth of sugar. Some of the big ones, like HC&S on the island of Maui, produce over 100,000 dollars' worth of sugar a year.

LG: Well, you can pretty quickly figure out the net result if the law is applied and the actual price falls below 13½ cents, which was their target price - for a while it was down as low as 11½ cents. Then of course the loss to Hawaii would be enormous.

What galled us more than anything else was that these internal battles among these employers - and they could fight among themselves as much as they want to; that's their business - were taking the form that the one group of workers who would really get hurt in this she-bang - and they had never gotten any benefit from any Sugar Act - would be the workers in Hawaii. They would be put at a real disadvantage when it came to any kind of bargaining.

It was under those circumstances that when the contract expired in '77, we extended it until November of that year, even though November is a very bad expiration date. We prefer the February date, like we have now. It was in August when Eddie Lapa and myself went back to Washington. He's the vice-president of Local 142 and he's from the sugar industry. Pat Tobin was back there, of course, as our Washington representative.

We spent over a week of very intensive campaigning before the vote came up on this piece of legislation, particularly to knock out this 50 thousand ton limit. We managed to put together a very effective coalition. The urban progressive coalition led primarily by Phil Burton; the black coalition led by Congressman Ron Dellums; and there was some help from the Hawaii congressmen.

We managed to muster enough votes to defeat that particular provision. I had to make our problems plain to some of the other unions which were there, because some were people representing the beet interests. The Teamsters were very helpful in our campaign. Their legislative representatives, Bartley O'Hara and Dave Sweeney, were assigned to work with us full time. On several occasions they had worked with us on the Sugar Act.

Corn Sweeter Than Sugar?

LG: Then, however, the corn sweetners had come into the market. The corn sweetner is a new process that has been developed, but not as yet in the form of domestic table sugar. They produce a sweetner out of corn, through some chemical process that for industrial purposes is more effective than any other kind of sugar. I'd say that some time in the future the corn sweetner might take over the bulk of the industrial market.

On the other hand, the corn sweetner problem is one of getting the price up to a certain point, because it's a newly developing industry; they need to get the price to a point where they can put in the capital investment to make it go. There was a whole melange in the Washington situation, but we decided to cut through it, get our job done insofar as Hawaii was concerned, and leave the next morning. We had accomplished exactly what we had gone back there for, and we didn't want to get neck deep into the internal politics of the sugar industry.

There was a push by some of these other unions who represented different kinds of growers to see if we could sit down with the sugar industry as a whole and work out a common program. We felt this would be quite hopeless, and frankly we did not want to get trapped into it.

Outfits like the Packinghouse Workers still had a long-standing grudge against the Louisiana growers because they had taken a beating when they started to organize the field workers in Louisiana. I don't see how they really would have gone along with anything like a common sugar program, even though Arnold Mayer, their legislative representative, went along with us on our drive to knock out the 50 thousand ceiling.

During the time I was in Washington and in the following negotiations, I was no longer International Secretary. I had retired, but I had made a

LG: committment to the members; they had asked me specifically before the convention election.

Ward: So then you went to Hawaii for those negotiations?

LG: I went to Hawaii for the negotiations in November. The negotiations didn't last very long: the employers had put together what they considered to be an attractive offer: a moderate improvement on pensions, not too bad; an improvement on some other elements of the contract; an offer on wages, not the worst in the world - 30 or 35 cents an hour. All we were talking about was a one-year contract, because we didn't know any more than they did where things were going.

But then they added a hooker concerning three plantations. From day one we had fought to maintain industry-wide bargaining, even though we might make special exceptions for a plantation because of a drought or something of the sort, giving them a bit of time to catch up and finally reach a regular wage line.

Their attitude in '77 was that nothing could be done; that these three plantations were having a lot of trouble. Two of them were C. Brewer plantations and one belonged to American Factors. Well, what puzzled me during the negotiations was that there had to be some sort of basic, internal contradiction among the employers, operating as they did under the unit rule, where they have to reach unanimity. Had C. Brewer decided it could run a fast one? And, in effect, take care of two of their plantations which had been having trouble, caused primarily by their own, premature consolidation of mills without taking sufficient precautions in terms of expanding capacity and so forth.

That was their own headache, even though they had merged a couple of these plantations like the ones at Maunakea and Kau. The plantations close by Hilo, such as Maunakea sugar, had swallowed up several of the other small plantations, which is understandable; they were small twenty-thousand-ton plantations and their days were limited, because of requirements for heavy equipment and so forth in the new industry that had developed in Hawaii.

Goldblatt's Swan Song On Sugar

LG: I couldn't shake loose of this conclusion that there had to be a contradiction there. Castle and Cooke were sitting at the negotiations, representing only one sugar plantation; they had liquidated Kohala, where in 1971 we had decided we'd hold the industry hostage until we cleaned up the situation. In 1974 we had to do the same thing in the case of Grove Farm where we did work it out.

Castle and Cooke, for example, had only one plantation located at Waialua, a very profitable plantation on an extremely productive piece of land, adequate water, excellent irrigation; I guess one of the most economically operated sugar plantations in the world. Castle & Cooke's interests have shifted away from sugar into the whole food area.

Castle and Cooke now includes things like Bumble Bee Products, Hawaii Tuna Packers, Standard Fruit bananas. They've opened up Idaho potatoes; they've gone into some canning operations. You name it and they seem to be in it.

I couldn't figure out what the devil could be in it for Castle and Cooke to take a strike over these plantations. Then there was Theo Davies. Theo Davies never had highly prosperous plantations, but they got by and they were doing quite well; they were on the Hamakua coast. They had become part of this international conglomerate - this British concern called Jardine Matheson.

I couldn't figure out where they were getting hurt; how did they get sucked into a fight of this sort? Alexander Baldwin had several plantations, including HC&S, the big one, a very profitable plantation. They also had McBride, where they had recently worked out this proposition on Grove Farm and were anxious to get going. The only outfit that puzzled me was American Factors; they were asking the same thing as C. Brewer; they wanted out as far as any improvements were concerned.

LG: The plantation they were talking about was Oahu Sugar, which is very close by Honolulu, on the island of Oahu. I finally decided in my own mind that they went along for the ride. American Factors had been doing extremely well.

They had gone into still another branch of American enterprise, the field of merchandizing: the Liberty Stores, I. Magnin, and lots more. These were all part of American Factors, in the same way that Alexander Baldwin, for example, now owns Matson.

Anyway, our discussions before the strike broke must have gone on in our strike committee for at least two days. There was a pretty sharp difference of opinion, not so much about whether we shut them all down or not, but the feeling of some people that maybe we were walking into a trap if we did shut them down. Maybe these three were being set up as decoys so that in the event we shut them down, one of the agencies would announce they had plans to liquidate a plantation, and that the union had driven another part of the sugar industry out of business.

Bear in mind that over the years since we had organized, a great many changes had taken place in the industry, including a lot of small plantations being swallowed by bigger ones, and in some cases just out and out liquidation because the plantations were so located as to make them unprofitable; outfits like old Waianae plantation, Waimanalo plantation, Kahuku plantation, went out of business; Waiakea Mill became part of Olaa, now Puna Sugar.

These things took place over the years, and in the main they were taken in stride and were handled pretty well. The liquidation of one of the major plantations would have been much more of a headache. Liquidation was also a mote in the eye of everybody down there, because the pineapple contract had been opened in 1974, and one of the big problems we had was that Dole Pinapple and Del Monte Pineapple announced they were going to wash out their operations on the island of Molokai. That's the only industry on Molokai, just the growing of pineapple. Del Monte decided to stay on, not only stayed on but even increased some of their acreage. Dole did get out.

LG: We spent hours in negotiations on a series of provisions to help those workers get located in other pineapple plantations, until it suddenly occurred to me that I had better go over and talk to the people involved. When I talked to them I found out: "Forget it - just no way." They put it very simply: "We were born here and we plan to stay here; we'll get by somehow."

Anyway, this problem of the three plantations took care of itself in a peculiar way. When the strike deadline was reached, we had sent out no permission for any plantation to operate, although in general discussions there had been sort of tacit agreement that we might let the three plantations operate, just so we could not be suckered into a trap.

But these members walked out, and they walked out in a way which forced me to do a lot of double thinking. For example, traditionally every time there had been a strike in sugar, one of the preconditions was a clean and efficient shutdown. In other words, all machinery was brought in to the mill yard. They didn't leave it out in the field to rust. Some machinery, unless it's oiled, and so forth, is going to deteriorate very badly if you're striking. You still plan to go back to work at the plant; you ought to be around if you want to be able to do a job.

But in this case, the guys were so angry about the whole thing, and particularly, the discussions that were going on about these three plantations being carved out of the industry, that they just abandoned their machines, sometimes leaving truckloads of sugar right on the highway and going home. I decided we had better sit and think about it a few days.

Pretty soon I had only one conviction there: trap or no trap, it was better to go along, whether you had unanimous agreement on a program that might not be 100 percent right than to get a divided union on a program that you considered to be 100 percent right; better off to settle for something that could be partly wrong; take your chances.

LG: We learned from the workers in that case, not the other way around. So we shut them down. I understood the best thing for me to do was to get the hell out of there. The Sunday I was leaving Bernie Eilerts, the head of the Hawaii Employers Council, said he wanted to come by and talk to me. So, I said "Sure" and called some of our local officials and said, "Eilert is coming by and says he wants to talk to me privately, but I suggest you be there and sit at the next table." (laughter)

They put a lot of stock in this business of man-to-man conversation, most of it bunk, a lot of hogwash. And Bernie Eilerts spelled out their position and I said, "From what you're telling me the three plantations have to stay out of the new contract; there might be a little bit of room on something, a few small issues, but no fundamental change in that position." He said, "That's right." And I said, "Well, in that case, the strike is on; whenever you get ready to negotiate, you notify our committee and I'll be down."

The strike didn't last very long, two or three weeks. Finally we got a call that they wanted to sit down and negotiate, and the negotiations were really quite easy.

We just sat there and said, "Look, you're the ones that asked for the meeting. You know perfectly well that we're not going to carve out these three plantations; they'll get the same as everybody else. We want some other improvements. You've convinced us you can pay more money by the kind of offer you put out."

So, we picked up a bit more money on wages, and something on pensions. The three plantations stayed within the industry bargaining unit and that's the way it wound up, in good shape. That was my swan song, insofar as sugar was concerned.

Ward: Yes, you got a very nice letter after that was over.

LG: Yes, I got a very friendly letter -

Ward: They wanted to buy you some golf clubs.

LG: Yes, as a matter of fact, the committee asked me, just before I left, to go out and buy myself a set of golf clubs and send them the bill. So, I did. I got a check back saying, "We know you need the golf clubs, but chances are you'll need some lessons as well, and green fees are not cheap." So, they sent back a gift that amounted to $2,000 bucks to cover the whole business.

It was a very fine gesture on their part; there was a feeling that we could handle the employers, even when they were trying to run one on us. I can't blame them. After what had happened on the bonuses and so forth, I could see why the employers would figure that it was time they picked up something too.

This Consultant Business

Ward: You evidently know a hell of a lot about the sugar industry. Could that be the reason why Dave Jenkins says that you could make a pot full of money if you went to work for the industry as a consultant?

LG: Oh, I don't know. I'm sure that if I had any real interest in acting as a legislative consultant or as any other kind of consultant to the sugar industry, they would definitely be interested; but, my God, whatever I've learned and whatever ability I might have, the union did that for me.

Ward: You can't visualize yourself on the other side of the table?

LG: Oh, no, no way!

Ward: Some guys have . . . .

LG: Some guys do. No, I can't see it, even in the legislative field, where you're not connected with the collective bargaining process and when my feelings have been that there may be a few points of identification between the interests of

LG: the sugar industry and the union in a piece of legislation. I guess that applies to something like sugar because it is such a highly regulated and complicated industry.

I'd be much more interested in doing something in conjunction with an international movement of sugar workers; that would make a lot more sense to me; particularly on setting some sort of international base rate for sugar, something I've believed in for a long, long time. I do know a fair amount about the sugar industry. I've done a good deal of study on it, beginning many years ago when I first got interested.

Dave's ideas of how you value services are his; I have mine.

Ward: Well, what kind of a salary did you wind up with and further, what kind of pension did you get when you retired from the ILWU?

LG: My final salary was $25,000 a year.

Ward: The pension is what, 50 percent?

LG: No, the pension is slightly over 50 percent; it's $14,000 a year.

Ward: These days, that isn't wealth.

LG: No, it isn't wealth, but neither do we miss any meals.

Ward: I don't see any signs of starvation around here.

LG: No, and there is something in the refrigerator if you're hungry. I think it's a generous pension.

Ward: Yes; then you get Social Security too.

LG: The Social Security is separate. Medical care is covered; very important, particularly when you get to my broken down stage. I have a real anger, as well as a contempt, for people who pick up their skills and whatever they know about an industry through the union and then go peddle it to the employer.

Ward: A lot of the guys in the Railroad Brotherhoods do that.

LG: I know, I know.

Ward: Even in Hawaii, some of the guys did it.

LG: I don't recall in Hawaii . . . .

Ward: Well, didn't Ed Wong? Wasn't he . . . .?

LG: No, he never was a sugar worker. There was a guy in pineapple who led some sort of a two-bit revolt during some of those redbaiting days - (Robert) Mookini was his name. He went to work for the employers for a while, and I think they found he was as much use to them as he was to us; good riddance to him.

Ward: Well, then your philosophy is that you don't change shirts, or coats.

LG: No, I don't see it, that's all. For the same reason, I don't buy this role of consultant. I understand the need for consultants in certain areas. The unions have gotten into a whole series of bargaining issues which might have been a mistake in the sense that they really don't belong in the union realm as much as they belong in society as a whole.

Here's what I mean; whether union pensions are a good thing as compared to a push for improved pensions nationally - that's one I think is really open for debate. You can get that down to the lowest level, that of the individual. Take a man who's busted his balls all his life trying to get a union in some area up in the northwest: he's never made it. They might have formed a union once but they got their back broken.

He doesn't desert the field; he stays in there and keeps fighting. This guy winds up finally with one pension; whatever he manages to get from Social Security. Here's another guy who might have gone through a battle somewhere and says, "The going is a little bit too rough here. I'm going where things are a little bit easier." Now,

LG: if he was one of the rebels who had been heaved out by reactionaries and run out by the un-American Activities Committee and so forth, where you help supply a haven for these people, that's one thing.

But if he's somebody who says, "I just don't want to take that much of a beef and I understand San Francisco is a good union town; there might be a job open on the front." He walks in, and come retirement he has himself a substantial union pension. The first guy I mentioned, busting his neck, he winds up with what the bird left on the limb . . . .

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LG: Well, in a field like pensions, whether we like it or not, we're in there. We're in there because government pensions are so damn small that there was a big push to get something over and above that. Same reason that even though Medicare may be around, it sure as hell doesn't do much good for the average family or the working man; or Medi-Cal, where you have to be an indigent to qualify.

So, we've gotten into fields now like health and welfare and pensions. There I can understand the need for specialists, people who know their business when I can call somebody and say, "Okay, we're thinking in terms of so much of an increase in pensions of say an extra $2 or $3 a year, after a year of service; what do you think that would run? Our present costs and the age population and the number of guys who would be retiring . . . " They do this work all the time; they are very competent with the figures and they can run these things through for you quickly.

Ward: They specialize in these things - -

LG: And they do a good job. I think we have been lucky with some of the people we have used in the ILWU; they have been very good. Sure, there are times when we do it ourselves, like I've told you of the incident in Hawaii. That was for bargaining purposes only.

Ward: You acted as a consultant in this last sugar situation in Hawaii, you might say.

LG: I really wasn't; I was acting as Secretary-Treasurer Emeritus, specifically assigned to this job.

Ward: Oh, somewhat similar to these retired judges who are asked to step in?

LG: And primarily to fulfill an obligation, a promise I had made before I left office. I can't see myself as a consultant on a lot of other things; some people say, "Why don't you act as a consultant in collective bargaining? You know a fair amount about that." And I guess I do.

Ward: How many contracts have you had your finger in?

LG: Oh, I don't know.

Ward: A hundred?

LG: Oh, at least, yes. Figure out there are all kinds of contracts I've taken part in in L. A. from Globe Mills to the wholesale drug group. I used to go down for years to help them handle their contracts. Thrifty Drug Company down there; negotiations around here. Not just with the master contract, but individual contracts like the one at Crockett, and some of the other contracts we've had around this area.

In the northwest on some contracts. In Hawaii not just sugar, but pineapple, hotels; I don't know, I've never kept a score sheet. I don't think they maintain that kind of a score sheet like they do for baseball or football.

Of course, it would be an impossible score sheet to devise, because negotiations are an animal all by themselves. That's the reason I don't think you can be a consultant in negotiations, except in a very rare situation; the Newspaper Guild thing was an example of that. That wasn't so much a matter of consultant as going in as a friend and saying, "Look, this thing is going to blow apart. Some things ought to be done and here is a solution that I think might work out."

But for me to go in and try to represent the Newspaper Guild, represent the printers - what the hell do I know about their problems, really?

LG: Those are the problems of the guy in the factory, the guy at the machine - he's familiar with those things. What does a consultant do? He just sits around and acts smart, figures out a smart piece of language like lawyers do. It's like the people who get the idea that negotiating is something like pulling rabbits out of a hat; a whole series of magician tricks, and all of a sudden you say, "Ah, that's it; gottcha that time."

I don't buy the consultant's role. Fundamentally, I'm a partisan, the first thing you have to know is who are the people you represent and what do they think, what do they want, how far are they prepared to go; not just what they would walk out on, but how much of that percentage are you going to lose. You're going to lose some.

Who'll be the remaining core, who will stick it out, are the measurements you have to make before you can really be an effective negotiator. Without that, I don't know what a consultant adds, except as to some of the qualified technicians.

I guess my definition of a consultant is like that of an expert. My definition of an expert has always been the same - the s.o.b. from out of town.

XXXV ISRAEL AND THE ARABS

(Interview 40: 9 January, 1979) ##

The Israeli Groupings

Ward: Lou, we were going to insert in the appropriate place in the oral history some of your remarks about the trip you took in 1976, along with other prominent Jewish people, to Israel.

LG: They weren't all Jewish. Nancy Swadish and Barbara Krantzler weren't.

Ward: Well, what was the bond between the members of this group? What was their objective?

LG: The group had been invited either by Mapam itself or one of its offshoots.

Ward: M A P A M ?

LG: Yes. Let me explain very quickly some of these distinctions so we don't get lost. The governing labor party had been in power in Israel from its institution, as far as I can recall, up until the time of the elections in 1977 when Begin and the Likud Party won out.

Mapai was this governing labor party - M A P A I, it's an acronym. Histadrut is part of Mapai in the main; not all of the members, because some of them belong to other political parties. Basically, it's supposed to be a labor movement; it also has many offshoots.

LG: As a matter of fact, for a long time they talked about two governments; Mapai was a government and Histadrut, this labor organization, was a sort of second government. Histadrut claimed seniority in the sense that they were in business and operating as an organization before Mapai came along after the 1948 War of Liberation; so the Histadrut is primarily aligned with Mapai.

Within the Histadrut, there's a system of proportional representation. It is a very democratic system. There are people who run from Mapam. Mapam is basically a socialist group; although Mapai also says that it is sort of socialist, but obviously dominated by the commerciantes, the people who are concerned with industry, trade, tourism.

In other words, Mapai think very much like the average American industrialist, but Mapam can still run candidates and they still get elected to some of these spots in the Histadrut. We met a few of the people who were from Mapam and were also with Histadrut. Mapam, though, is a socialist group; the principal basis of the Mapam is the kibbutz. This is what has to be understood.

The kibbutz organization is a forerunner of everything, because the first Jewish settlers who returned to Israel were determined to return to the land. They weren't going to Israel to open up a shop. Their primary interest was to return to the land; to be completely self-sufficient people and to do everyting from garbage collection to being the cops. In other words, they were going to build a society around the whole concept of the land.

A kibbutz is a very genuine commune in the true sense of the word. There are different forms of agricultural structure there; in the case of the kibbutz, the land is owned by the kibbutz as a whole. Working in the kibbutz and being a member of the kibbutz gives you certain rights in terms of your health care, your right to work, your right to get fed.

Most of the kibbutzim are quite prosperous now; the right to housing, the right to schooling. For example, many of the kibbutz movement people who are

LG: part of the Mapam, the leftwing socialists, would not even trust the public schools with their children, so they put an enormous amount of their annual income into setting up their own school system. This was because the school system, in many cases, was dominated by the religious people; people on the kibbutz are largely non-religious.

The Mapam is worthwhile studying and seeing; no question, it has become highly successful. There are also things called the moshiv which is more like a cooperative; and some call these a kibbutz, but they are not in the true sense of the word.

What has to be borne in mind is that while Mapam has its initial footing and ground work in the kibbutz, it still has a certain amount of following among the industrial workers; but obviously most of its attention is paid to kibbutz problems.

Kibbutz Artzi is a central operating office for the kibbutz or kibbutzim as a whole. In other words, it is a central purchasing power, a central place to make loans, a central place from which to arrange for the buying of equipment or what have you; and it has branched out and done a number of other things.

There's no question that the Mapam had differences among its members, some of them very sharp differences. After the 1967 war they voted to join what they called an alliance, sort of a national front; and even that vote was around 60-40. In other words, they were not too enthusiastic about it.

I'm sure that there are members of the Mapam who to this day are still looking back and figuring it was a mistake, that they had no business identifying with the Mapai because while it was a so-called labor party, it was also dominated by people like Golda Meier and others whose policy was generally directed towards the growth of industrialization, the growth of commerce, with their foreign policy completely oriented toward the United States.

LG: In the Mapam, for example, and in the kibbutzim which are connected with the Mapam, you still find a very strong feeling that there also ought to be alignments with the Soviet Union. They don't get into the screaming drill about the Soviet Union that some of the others do. This distinction has to be made.

A third - there are about ten parties there altogether and we won't try to cover them all - large group is the Likud, made up primarily of people who are right-wingers, both in their political thinking and economic thinking.

There was also a division in the Communist party - they are both very tiny parties - primarily around the whole question of the Arabs and the relationship that Israel ought to take toward the Palestinians. I'm trying to give you this background first, because without it you'd get lost.

Ward: The purpose of these people who went, including yourself, was to accomplish something, as I recall.

LG: The group was going there on the invitation of the Kibbutz Artzi and Givat Haviva, an Arab-Israeli Institute; they were directly connected with the Mapam. Mapam is also the central financial support of the excellent magazine called New Outlook.

I joined the group a day or two late because I was tied up with something else. Their objective was to show us around the kibbutz movement, and around Israel as a whole; spend some time in Jerusalem. On our own, the group made a trip down to Masada, a fascinating trip all by itself.

We spent a good deal of time around Jerusalem, including the eastern section, now under the control of the Israeli government, although it is the Arab section. I spent an extra day or two primarily with one of the men who was connected with Kibbutz Artzi. He was from New York City and had migrated there. I visited him and his wife there at his kibbutz - lovely house, lovely place; an apartment rather than a house. I had dinner with them, beautiful dining room, a tremendous amount of food right off of their own kibbutz. I mean they lived well, they ate well.

Ward: You added a syllable to kibbutz?

LG: Oh, Kibbutz Artzi - that is just a central organization of the kibbutzim. So, we had a chance to do a lot of talking and see a lot of things. A series of things stood out and I'll try to mention them as best I can.

Peace Or Land?

LG: I made a trip with Hannan Cohn, the chap from New York; very outspoken guy, a very good man. The two of us drove to the Golan Heights; it was interesting going through that set of fortifications the Syrians had built there. And you could see where they could really harass some of the kibbutzim in the farms right below. They are within lobbing distance of a medium range gun; you could understand how some of these feelings grew up over the years, particularly with the Syrians insistent on keeping this row alive.

To me, the thing that stood out most at the Golan Heights is that this is a huge area. We could see a town which I think is called Kenetra, on the Golan Heights in a part that was Syrian. I'll get some of these names wrong because you can't remember them all. It's a town that was pretty thoroughly bombed out by the Israelis, but the land is now being worked.

I asked, "Who's working this land?" Hannan said, "Well, members of the kibbutz, the younger people who decided they're prepared to go out there. That's the way some of these kibbutzim grow; younger people decide to go out and set up a new kibbutz." Well, the place looked lush and in excellent shape in terms of its handling and management.

I asked, "What happens if you do have peace with the Arab countries?" At that particular moment in many cases people, when you talk to them about peace with the Arabs, would say, "Well, just no way; you can't talk to them; they won't talk to you and you can't talk to them." I would reply,

LG: "Well, somewhere along the line there will have to be some discussions. My feeling is that Israel is making a terrible mistake in not returning all the lands taken in the '67 war."

Hannan's reaction was not completely opposed to that; he said, "Yes, there ought to be a couple of minor border adjustments which both could agree upon and would make sense. Other than that, the land should be returned", he says. "There is still a great deal of undeveloped land we could work ourselves. We don't need this land, and of course, peace would be far more important than having the land."

And I asked him, "Look, these people who are now in Golan Heights, they've worked here - it was 1976, so they had worked there for at least 8 or 9 years - and they have put in a lot of back-breaking work; they have done a hell of a job. They've raised families there. How are they going to feel about moving out?"

His reaction was "They'll move; peace is more important." I hope he's right. I just hope he's right. That's all I can say.

Ward: These people wouldn't be of this deeply religious sect that's going . . . .

LG: You're talking about another group that's called the Gus-Emunin. I mentioned that about the Golan Heights because it is significant. In the last issue of New Outlook there's an odd remark by one of the writers that even some of the people in the Mapam, or in the kibbutz movement, are having second thoughts about some of the West Bank area; when they talk about the West Bank area they're talking about the Golan Heights and the whole she-bang.

It's one of the difficulties that is bound to arise when you have endless occupation of a country. My thinking was that the longer Israelis occupy the Arab lands, the more difficult it will be to make the changeover. So, that was one incident that occurred. While we were in Israel, of course, our main source of information was the people we were going around with; and also the Jerusalem Post;

LG: anything in English. During this time there was an act by this arch-religious group called the Gus-Emunin. Hannan Cohn said of them, "Well, they're just fanatics, that's all - crazy." As far as he was concerned, he was non-religious. I think that in many of the kibbutzim, however, they would celebrate the Jewish holidays as holidays.

While we were there a group of these fanatics went to a lower court and got permission from some judge, who obviously didn't know what the hell was doing, to go ahead and pray on the Temple Mount.

Well, the Temple Mount contains the third most important locale of the Arabs. There's Mecca, Medina and the Temple Mount. There are two temples there, one of which contains what they insist is the Rock of Abraham.

You are so overwhelmed by the history of the place, and by the fact that these Muslims all maintain the same ancestry as the Jews. They're all children of Abraham, they're closer than cousins. They're direct bloodline, as they put it, because they too are children of Abraham.

They have the Rock where Abraham supposedly offered to sacrifice Isaac to God. They also have the rock from which Mohammed left by horse, you know, to the heavens. Oh, I mean, it just wallows in religious background - the whole place does.

But here were these youngsters, part of the Gus-Emunin, who got a ruling that they could go pray at the Temple Mount, which they did. Promptly, of course, this caused a riot in which the Arabs were heaving rocks and everything else; battles going on all over the place. A higher court stepped in a day or so later and said, "Forget it." Because this is, without question, the holy place of the Arabs.

As a matter of fact, there's an interesting sign just above the Wailing Wall, which is part of Solomon's Temple. The sign is on a wooden plaque, written in English, which quotes the Bible to the effect that only the high priests of the Jewish religion were permitted on the Temple Mount at the time of the Temple.

LG: The stories there! How much of these are true and how much of these things grow up over the years, you don't know. There were stories that when the Chief Rabbis would go up there to pray, they could not be accompanied. Consequently they would tie a rope around the rabbi, just in case he passed out or something, they could pull him back down from Temple Mount without entering it.

You have no idea of how steeped in religion some of these places are until you visit them. This was one of the incidents that give you such a strong feeling that the Jewish handling of the Arab situation must be changed; otherwise it will continue as a violent thing for years to come.

Also during the time we were there, it was announced that in the case of certain lands that had been in the hands of Arab families for many generations, hundreds of years, the government had decided these lands were to be put to a better use and was, in effect, moving in to expropriate them; make payment, and so forth.

They always kept telling us, "Look, we make payment;" but the Arabs didn't want any payment. They wanted to keep their land. Yes, they might have been using it for grazing goats, for all I know, or maybe not doing a goddam thing. This was in the Valley of Galilee. Most of that is very good agricultural land. Here was the government just moving in and taking over the land.

Still another thing was going on while we were there. I think we got the results while we were there or a day or two after we left. A series of elections were taking place in a lot of the Arab communities. They were electing local councilors who were still controlled, of course, by Israeli occupation; they had a certain number of house sheiks, if you want to call them that. These were the guys that got along with the Israeli government.

You get an idea of how strong the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization) was because they put up candidates in all these little towns and when the election returns finally came in, I think they won in 90 percent of the cases.

Ward: As against these . . . .

LG: These house sheiks - these guys who had gotten along with the Israeli government and were taken care of.

Ward: The PLO guys were less likely to get along with . . .

LG: This was a direct and outright repudiation of everything the Israelis were doing. So, I mention these things as incidents of provocation and what I consider to be real stupidity in the way of handling the Arabs; a certain degree of arrogance.

Ashkenazi vs. Sephardic vs. Arab

Ward: I get the notion that your up-and-coming Israeli feels superior to his Arab counterpart; there's no reason, as far as his education . . . .

LG: Yes and no. It is true that by and large the government of Israel up until now has been an Ashkenazi government. The Ashkenazis are the European Jews as against Sephardic Jews. Those who come in from Morocco, Algeria and so forth are Sephardic. The Ashkenazi Jews in the main have had the advantage of a much better education, a pretty rich background in many fields. They are good administrators, good businessmen, the key people all through the administration there.

In other words, straight line of all the people we're talking about, like Golda Meier, (Premier Menahem) Begin, the man who preceded him, (Yitzhak) Rabin; they are all part of the Ashkenazi line. Their attitude toward the Arab was that they were just a lower people.

Incidentally, to think there are no tensions in Israel between the Sephardic and the Ashkenazis, you'd be all wrong. The Ashkenazi Jew feels he is far superior to the Sephardic Jew. He comes from a different background, in many cases one which is much more literate; he knows a great deal more about business and what have you. You get all these

LG: currents. I mention these things because you look for things to support the things you believe in. I felt that the '67 war was justified; I think perhaps the biggest mistake was the United Nations removing its forces at the request of Nasser (President Gamal Nasser of Egypt).

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Ward: We were discussing the 1967 war, the Nasser request and all that.

LG: And I fundamentally felt that the Israeli government did the only thing they could do in that situation.

My parents were strong supporters of this place called Birobidzhan, which was an area set aside in the Soviet Union; they supported it with a couple of bucks here and there, although I don't think it ever made it, really. The locale was such that there was not much of a willingness to migrate there.

I think the strong Jewish groups in Europe that wanted to move out after all the pogroms and the persecution under the Czar thought more in terms of getting into their own homeland with which they identified, primarily for religious reasons, as the old Palestine.

While I am not a Zionist, I've come to the conclusion that the presence of an Israel is actually essential; a home for people who felt they were being pushed around; being evicted from the societies they live in. Whether I thought it was a good idea or a bum idea before World War II, to my mind became only theoretical and terribly unimportant; the important thing was that with the Nazis and the Holocaust, Israel became a fact of life.

Bear in mind, the total population of Israel prior to WWII must have been very, very tiny. It was primarily the Zionist kibbutz movement. Those were the people who worked the farms and in many cases did a really heroic job, draining swamps, taking land that hadn't been used for years - just allowed to let go - and turning it into a very fertile area.

Ward: Well, Israel really became an entity in 1948, didn't it?

LG: 1948 - right. But the Holocaust and the determination by whatever remaining Jews there were to get the hell out was completely understandable. On that score I felt that providing for an Israel made a lot of sense. And the '67 war made sense to me, but not the '56.

As a matter of fact, Terry and I made a brief visit to Israel a few years after the 1956 Suez Canal incident - that was the time when Egypt seized the Suez Canal and the French and the British moved against them. Then, the Israelis decided to get the thing, too. And in visiting one of her relatives, Terry drooled over a book of photographs showing the effectiveness of the Israeli armed forces when they moved into the Sinai.

People like that, when they are cranked up, if you try to tell them that Jews bleed too, it doesn't mean much. Even then I felt the Israeli attitude toward the Palestinians was so negative that they ought to be making overtures for peace in every possible way. I said, "The Gaza Strip is going to become a bone in your throat." They said, "Look, the Arabs have all kinds of land."

Ward: Let them go somewhere else?

LG: "Let them go somewhere else; they have all kinds of land and we only have a little piece of land." When I talked to one of their kids who was driving us around, a nice youngster, I said, "What happened in 1948?" He said, "Well, I was around the port of Jaifa at the time; it's close by Tel Aviv. Terry's family name comes from that; her family name is Jaffe.

He said, "All of a sudden, the Arabs were flooding down to the port to get aboard ship." I said, "Why?" He said, "Rumors were going around that they were all going to be killed." I said, "Well, did anybody do anything to try to stop it and tell them to stay home?" He said, "No, I guess, if anything, we helped a little bit."

LG: Yes, it is this feeling that Israel is a Jewish state, although there are enormous numbers of Arabs within it, even right now. Leaving aside the West Bank, leaving aside the Gaza Strip and just talking about Israel itself, there's a large number of Arabs who live there, or come in to work.

On that score, Israel is changing a great deal. Arabs, for example, are now doing a lot of the heavy work. This is in spite of the fact that Jews have always been good building tradesmen. As a matter of fact, in this country at one time there was the Jewish Building Trades in New York City.

Ward: I didn't know that.

LG: Yes, there were locals of plumbers and electricians, carpenters. I guess they spoke Yiddish; it was easier. They were part of the so-called Jewish Building Trades. They have always been good craftsmen and good builders.

But by the time we made this last trip, a lot of the building trades work was being done by Arabs. The Israelis will tell you, "We pay them much better wages than they can get anywhere else." There is trade that goes on all the time from the West Bank, including agricultural commodities; they say the Arabs get paid better that way. All of that I think can be true. The unfortunate thing is that does not give a people the kind of independence they strive for.

Ward: It creates a class differential?

LG: A class differential. It gets to a point that, while it is not the same thing as saying, "Look, we treat our slaves very well," it has the same kind of connotation.

But, to wind up this Israeli bit, there were a lot of things we saw there that were just fantastic. I think a trip to that part of the world without visiting Masada is a terrible mistake; it's a fantastic place. It was built by the zealots, a Jewish group which was determined that they would not submit to the Romans; they would not convert and not give up their Judaism.

LG: They built this place on the top of a butte off the Dead Sea. The butte must stand about a thousand feet, I'd say, with these tiny trails so that only one person can walk up at a time. They built their store houses there and they had the most ingenious system of catching water from the rain and storing it in large cisterns and wells; store houses for grain and everything else. And they were convinced they could hold out for a period of at least five years.

Well, it didn't work out that way. The Romans attacked it with five Roman armies. Imagine sitting out there right off the Dead Sea. Finally, the Romans built a ramp up one side and assaulted Masada. The Jews had a pledge among themselves that no one would take them alive. And I think there were three people found alive; a mother and two children.

The whole concept, the kind of ardor and belief that had to have gone to the idea of establishing this place! I mean, where all the food had to be brought in, to build these store houses, and to be able to survive on top of this butte. These are places that have to be seen; things like the Valley of Gethsemane are fascinating. You take this trip of the stations of the cross or whatever it's called, you know; that's the usual thing.

Although on one occasion when we were visiting the Arab section, I was walking with a man who used to be with the NMU years ago and now he's with OSHA (Office of Health and Safety Administration). He turned to me and said, "You get the same feeling I do?" These shutters were coming down; they have these metal shutters on small shops - this was in the Arab part of Jerusalem, tiny little streets thousands of years old.

I said, "Yeah," and he said, "I think we better walk a little faster." We did, and sure enough about a half hour later a riot broke out, with all kinds of rocks being thrown. I mean, the hostility there was so deep; how they're going to overcome it, I don't know, except by a real effort by the Israelis to recognize that there is a Palestinian people.

Angry Discussions

LG: That's one thing the Israelis won't accept. I was talking to Dave Jenkins a while back and asked him to read this last copy of New Outlook. It had an article which made the most sense, that the position being taken by Begin is that Sadat (President Anwar Sadat of Egypt) must break with the rest of the Arab world and say, "Look, the Palestinians are on their own, you Arabs do as you please; we hope you don't do too badly."

The Egyptians can't do that; impossible. For Sadat to do that would result in such chaos in the Arab world and within Egypt that things would begin to fly apart. These are really the things they are arguing about on this question of why can't the peace treaty be completed.

It has nothing to do with the Sinai; it has to do with whether or not they take the initial steps toward some sort of genuine autonomy for the Palestinian people. Meanwhile, people like Begin and others, particularly this arch-religious group, I mean, can think of nothing but colonization of the West Bank. They don't call it the West Bank; they call it Judea and Samaria. Judea and Samaria were part of the old Jewish kingdom -

Ward: On a religious basis?

LG: Strictly on a religious basis. They say they have the original deed; it's right there in the Old Testament. You look it up there; there's a copy of the deed.

Well, our trip down there wound up in a peculiar way. A day or so before the rest of the group left - I left later - Avram Yedidia's* sister, who is married to somebody in the government or an attorney and lives in Tel Aviv, had a gathering at her house.

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* One of the visiting group

LG: There were some interesting people there, a couple of people who had been with the ambassadorial staff. One of them, I know, had been stationed in South America for a number of years; a couple of lawyers, all apparently fairly high up in the government structure.

We got into a long discussion on these things; I was very blunt. I said, "I don't see any answer around here. You're asking my opinion about things. You go back to your 1967 boundaries, that's all." I said, further, that the 1967 war was justified, but the continued occupation of another country's land is imperialism, no matter how you cut the goddam thing. "Oh, no - no", they said, "how about our defense?"

I said, "De-militarize the goddam thing. How about the Golan Heights, when they can shoot right down at you? They have missles that go 100 miles; they have cannon that will shoot five miles. The only security is de-militarization; return the land and de-militarize it. Why shouldn't the whole Sinai be de-militarized? No harm in that. The Palestinian people do have to be recognized. You cannot continue this policy of colonization." "Well, we paid for the land," they said.

We got into some pretty sharp arguments. One of them raised the question, "Would the United States come to the defense of Israel?" I said, "You're asking my opinion, I'll give it to you. I don't think you could find a single American guy to do it. There might be a few ardent Zionists, maybe, who will pick up a rifle and go out and help; I guess even people like myself, if they felt it was such a dire danger, would do the same thing.

"But if you're talking about the Americans as a group, going to war in support of Israel, I think you're making a mistake. We've been burned in Vietnam. We went through something in Korea where we had no business either. You are not going to get the American people involved. That's all there is to it."

LG: A few years later, I made a similar remark to the Chinese when I was asked a similar question: Why don't the Americans do something about the Russians moving into places like the Horn of Africa, into Ethopia and Eritrea? I told them the same thing; right now you are not going to get the Americans to go to war anywhere. They're just not interested. They would vote "No".

Of course the whole thing in Israel ended up with "You're not really a Jew! What's your name?" "Goldblatt! I haven't changed my name." Finally, one guy said, "Where did your parents come from?" I said, "Lithuania." Some of the Ashkenazi have always felt the Lithuanians Jews are a group slightly apart; they challenge things. They also produce a lot of rabbis, and they also will argue with you all the time.

It wasn't a happy meeting. When they wanted to know whether I was a Zionist, I said, "No, I'm not--I have never been a Zionist. If I were a Zionist I'd be here living in Israel. It's just that simple to me. I believe in Ben-Gurion's definition of Zionism - if you were a Zionist, you lived in Israel and you got there somehow. If you were not, you were living in the diaspora." I think you call it the galut, being an outcast. So, I said, "I'm not a Zionist; if anything, I'm an internationalist."

Ward: And you got out of there alive?

LG: Yes, as a matter of fact, Peter Mazey* remarked to me afterwards, "Well, I can't do anything but admire your tenacity." I wouldn't back up a step. They started going round and round on these questions, but I had told the group in advance, "One of the things that's going to happen, mark my words, unless it's just having tea and biscuits it's going to be put on a basis of 'You're either with us or against us'." Sure enough, that's exactly what happened.

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*Another member of the visiting group.

XXXVI THE LAST WAREHOUSE PROBLEM

(Resuming Interview 38: 12 December, 1978) ##

New Man Talks Tough

Ward: Okay, Lou, you wanted to talk about the '76 warehouse situation.

LG: I'll try to pick up a couple of items we skipped over - we bounced around the 1970s, taking items issue by issue.

Ward: Yes, instead of chronologically.

LG: We wound up with a good solid agreement in '73. '76 was a different kettle of fish, partially, I believe because of a change in personnel on the part of the employers. J. Hart Clinton was no longer the head of the San Francisco Distributors' Association; they changed the name of the S. F. Distributors to the Industrial Employers and Distributors Association or something like that. Anyway, it's the same basic group, and they began to branch out to handle other groups.

Ray Smarden had been an assistant to Clinton. He considered himself an able guy. I think that he figured that Clinton was not tough enough, and early in those negotiations, he went into a spiel about if there was a battle in the industry, he was convinced that the employers could hang tough for at least three months; that there would be casualties, he would lose some members, but he was sure he had a hard core of people that would stay with him.

LG: Well, I couldn't quite understand the nature of his pitch, other than to try to set an atmosphere that in effect said, "All right, if you insist on going to a beef, you'll win some and we'll win some, but things won't be the same." I think he knew better than to make the flat statement that he could hold his whole group together.

Word got back to me; I'm trying to remember from whom. I think it came from some employer who talked to one of the Teamsters, who got hold of me and said, "'There's quite a rhubarb in the Distributors. A lot of the employers are yelling their heads off, saying 'What does Smarden mean, talking about a three or four-month strike? If we can work something out that makes sense, we'll work it out.'" I don't think he had been in office long enough to have that much confidence from his own people.

Clinton on that score had been quite good. He knew the value of covering his own bases all the time, and he made no pretense as to what he was, publisher of the San Mateo Times, a wealthy man and an Irish Catholic. I'm sure that somewhere in the back of his mind he had a real hatred for the British. I doubt if he had much sympathy for the IRA, but he had very little sympathy for scabs, or the whole idea of traitors.

Ward: Not too difficult to work with, then?

LG: Very honest and forthright. One advantage you had with Clinton was that he had done his homework before he got there. You didn't get into a continuous situation where he'd say, "Well, I have to think about this," or "We have to have some time," causing another of these roundy-go-roundies. He knew the importance of getting his leeway, understanding his latitude and how far he could go. And when he took a position, that was it.

Ward: Smarden was different?

LG: Well, I guess there had been a palace revolt or something inside the Distributors. I think Smarden led it by getting some of the employers

LG: to push Clinton as to whether or not he would be full-time for the Distributors Association. Clinton's primary work was as an attorney, but he was also the head of the Distributors Association; he figured that with a staff he didn't have to be there full time.

I think he was the kind of a guy who was not going to be bogged down full time, either. He had other interests; I gathered that even to this date he loves to write editorials for the San Mateo Times. I don't think they're going to fall in the same class as some of Heywood Broun's writing, but . . . .

Ward: It was also his paper! (laughter)

LG: So, I personally liked Clinton. Now, maybe if he were dealing in a direct employer-employee relationship, let us say, with workers at the San Mateo Times, it might have been another story. You never can tell, but insofar as his relationships with Warehouse were concerned, I'd say that he was a pretty straight guy; his word, once given, was good.

Ward: Yes, but what was the outcome of this?

LG: But this time around, Clinton was no longer in the picture; he had been eased out. Smarden decided he would strengthen the employer team. On that score, I guess, he did think differently than Clinton.

Now, I'm just speculating, because Clinton went along with the job of joint negotiations; but frankly, I don't think he trusted some of the employer groups. They were creatures of convenience. Their primary job was to hold their little leagues together, carve out a small empire, get along with some of the unions by gentlemen's understandings. No question, when it came to the details of negotiations and so forth, some of them had almost no interest in a lot of the things which we would consider to be very important; and so would Clinton. So, I don't think he had too much respect for some of the other employer groups.

LG: Smarden, on the other hand, decided that if he could toughen up the other employer groups that would be of some help in terms of his own bargaining situation. Well, while it might have been of some help to him, I think it was of more help to us, because some of these same employer groups, even during periods of difficult negotiations in the master warehouse contract, somehow would always keep in touch with their corresponding numbers in the union.

It was not too uncommon to bump into them having lunch together, someplace in the middle of negotiations. In the 1967 strike, we found a whole group of them meeting up at the Town House in the bar, led by Sam Beard, who was just a complete character.

Ward: Well, what was the outcome in '76, then?

LG: In '76 there seemed to be almost absolute refusal to meet any of the issues. They were the kind of negotiations where you were bogged down from day one.

Ward: Oh, Smarden wanted a strike, then?

LG: He talked that way, although, as I said, we got word that there was serious doubt as to whether his own people wanted it as badly as he wanted it. Now, maybe Smarden figured, okay, here's his chance to earn his stripes in one fell swoop. That could very well have been, because when we finally did get a proposal from them it was such a picayune offer, so miniscule, that it was turned down automatically.

A Short, Sweet Strike

LG: We took a strike vote with the Teamsters and it was overwhelming for a joint strike. We had some very big stewards' meetings; one at the Jack Tar Hotel. It was the only place we could get. The place was jammed. The feeling was there that we were going to get ourselves a good hunk of money.

LG: Money and pensions were big issues. In health and welfare, we needed a lot of dough because prices were escalating.

There was a three week strike; everything went down and stayed down, Teamster warehouses as well as ILWU warehouses. We came out of the negotiations with a very good contract; 45 cents each year, plus an additional cost of living allowance that could go up 25 cents a year, which it did.

Our anticipation on that score was correct. It ran to about 70 cents a year. We picked up improvements in pensions, although we did not get the same amount of pensions backward and forward. We got a certain increase for prospective pensioners, and half of that amount for those who were already retired.

Ward: What happened to Smarden?

LG: He survived it; he's still there. Not an easy man to deal with. He's recently been making remarks to the effect that after all the warehouse industry is changing a lot and some of the big outfits he represents might feel that the Association is not the place for them.

Now, these may be incitements to guerilla warfare. True, we are living in a different era; there's no question in my mind that a series of ballots conducted now would not be like the ones in the thirties, where the question of the master contract became almost an employer demand because the leverage was on the union side, and so were the mobility and the initiative. It might not be quite as true today; this may be part of his conditioning process, trying to lay the groundwork for new negotiations.

Ward: Anyway, so he had his little strike.

LG: We came out of it in good shape in '76 and those were my last negotiations with Warehouse.

XXXVII THAT DELEGATION TO CHINA

The First Inquiries

Ward: Okay, let's talk about the China delegation problem.

LG: Sometime in 1971 or in early 1972, I was in New York and by that time the People's Republic of China had been admitted to the U. N. One of the men who represented China at the U. N. was named Tang Min Chao. Tang Min Chao, by the way, is an old friend of a number of people from Berkeley. He was in Berkeley at the time some of us were there, around '30 and '31. I know he was a close friend of Edith Jenkins, Hazel Grossman. I had met him a couple of times. He left Berkeley and went to New York. He set up a small leftwing China language newspaper.

Here was Tang back in the United States, representing the People's Republic of China at the U. N. So, I called him and asked if I could come by to see him, reminded him who I was, and he said, "Sure, just come on by at 11:30," or whenever it was. I went by to see him and he said, "We'll have lunch together." So, we went down to the dining room; I gathered he had not been there very long.

Ward: At the U.N.?

LG: At the U.N.; the maitre d' there is picked because he must have a computer memory of every single delegate and where he's supposed to sit; the goddam protocol.

LG: This was an occasion, because here was Tang Min Chao, you see. "Oh, yes, yes - we have your table for you," and all this business. And Tang was funny; he said, "Order anything you want, there's really only one good thing about this job." I said, "What's that?" "I don't have to pay any taxes." (laughter)

So, I asked Tang whether or not a delegation from the ILWU would be welcome in China. He said, "Sure, but I'm not the person to handle it. It doesn't go through my office. It goes through the liaison office in Washington. My suggestion is that you write to the All-China Federation of Trade Unions proposing such a delegation, send a copy to the liaison office, and send me a copy." I'm sure he must have followed through with it.

Before long, we had an invitation from the China People's Republic inviting us to send a delegation of six or seven to visit China. During that time there had been a lot of discussion in the ILWU Executive Board. Harry kept making the point that we had our overseas delegations.

These are rank and filers, and under our constitution they are sent through a separate fund which cannot be used by any Executive Board member or any official of the ILWU. In other words, if an official of the ILWU goes overseas the expense is paid out of the general treasury, while the overseas fund can only be used for the specific purpose for which it is earmarked.

The general feeling of the Executive Board was that, inasmuch as we would probably be the first trade union delegation going to the new China, it ought to include at least a couple of officers.

Ward: This was for the purposes of "face," if nothing else?

LG: Yes, of giving the thing proper status. So, the idea was that we would try to get two officers, two members of the Executive Board and two rank and filers; a mixed delegation.

LG: Well, a lot of things happened in 1972 - '73. In 1972 we were invited. I think it was at a meeting up in Vancouver, an Executive Board meeting, that I made the announcement that I intended taking Terry along, and paying her way myself. I didn't expect the Chinese to pick up that tab. Harry said, "Oh, that's a form of free loading." I said, "I don't think so; I think that once in a while it is a good idea. I'm sorry I haven't had a chance to take her some other places."

Wives - A Strange Question

LG: For some reason, he was fit to be tied about the idea of Terry going along. Then, he said he was not going to go, period, at which point one of the board members suggested that Bill Chester go along. Harry changed his mind and said, "Well, I think I will go. And I think I'll add Nikki (Bridges'present wife) too."

Next there was a proliferation of the delegation with some additional wives; I think it got up to thirteen. Harry suggested adding George Roth, an M.D. who lives in Mill Valley, as a personal physician. This struck me as another way of telling a country that they couldn't take care of us if anybody got sick.

Then, he wanted Kathy to go along, his daughter. Then, he thought Ah Quon from Hawaii (wife of Bob McElrath) who was born of Chinese parents. I don't think she was born in China, but she might like to visit the graves of her ancestors. So, he kept piling it up. At one point he mentioned taking Matt Connolly from the Apostleship of the Sea along, because he wanted to go. He had been to China at one time as a missionary. My feeling was that he was loading it up to the point where somebody would say, "Enough is enough."

Ward: Then somebody said, "Enough is enough"?

LG: Yes, as a matter of fact, I told George Roth that and hurt his feelings very badly. I said, "George, this is supposed to be a trade union delegation,

LG: and whether you know it or not, I think you are being used just to help load this thing down to the point where somebody just throws up his hands and says, 'Impossible.'"

Meanwhile, two other things happened which were not very happy. One of our overseas delegations was sent to Taiwan. Madame Chiang Kai Chek is no fool. She is without any question the original Dragon Lady of the world. While our delegation was there she had her photograph taken shaking hands with them. This turns up in The Dispatcher; quickly there's a wire from the Chinese saying that their official policy is that Taiwan is part of China and they don't accept the idea of anybody having similar relations between Taiwan and the People's Republic of China.

We sent a long and detailed explanation to the All-China Federation of Trade Unions that our overseas delegations went everywhere. We didn't necessarily approve the philosophy of any country they went to; it was their job to simply observe how people lived, their working conditions, and so forth; and that under no circumstances did this indicate political approval of Taiwan. Quite to the contrary, we were opposed to the two-China policy, and always had been. We were opposed to what was going on in the way of military aid to Taiwan; Taiwan was an internal problem for China to solve.

They accepted that and the invitation was still okay. But then, of course, towards the tail end of 1972 I couldn't have done anything about it anyway; I was in no shape to go. The invitation was not taken up at that time.

Ward: That's right, you were in the hospital.

LG: In 1973, the issue came up in the most peculiar way. The delegation was still an acceptable thing to the union as a whole, but he brought it up to the northern California caucus.

Ward: Harry?

LG: Yes. You have caucuses of each area to place your nominees for International Executive Board and also to make your endorsement on the International officers. Harry said he wanted to make it plain, he was not going to take Nikki on any China delegation, and as a matter of fact she was standing outside waiting for him and he was going to tell her that. He believed that was a form of freeloading and shouldn't be done.

Well, at that point, Archie Brown - that's the only time I realized he had any sense of humor, really - gets up and says, "Harry, if the Chinese are in that bad shape economically, I suggest we pass the hat at the convention and give them a couple of bucks."

Harry was so determined that it wasn't going to work out that at another point when the delegation was supposed to leave, we were at an International Executive Board meeting and Harry announced that there was a great crisis in Longshore coming up. He said the emergency was of such importance that there was no way of scheduling this trip.

Harry suggested a secret ballot vote be taken that the visit of the delegation be postponed in view of the fact that this crisis was looming in Longshore - one that never did develop and around which no caucus was ever held. Well, the secret ballot resulted with the board voting with him. Bob Peebles, one of our delegates from Canada, a pretty blunt-spoken guy, says, "Heck, if there is a crisis coming up in Longshore, you don't give anybody a chance to vote. There's no need for it. There's no question of what the hell I have to do."

Then Harry wrote a column for The Dispatcher on China in which he quoted a HongKong watcher, a New York Times reporter, who announced he had information that the trade unions in China were being reconstituted. Harry put it, "This is great news."

Well, when the Chinese got that they flipped their lid completely. This business of relying on a Hong Kong watcher! Hong Kong watchers are the source of 90 percent of the bullshit

LG: that comes into this country. That killed the delegation; the Chinese cancelled the invitation.

In 1974 Harry went before the Executive Board and said, "Let's withdraw our invitation," and one of the guys made a motion to withdraw our request for an invitation. That was rather silly, here the invitation had been cancelled, and now we don't want to go.

Finally, The Trip To China

Ward: Well, this is as good a time as any to ask: you and Terry finally did go to China?

LG: Yes.

Ward: But that was . . . .

LG: Yes, Terry and I finally did go to China - in 1978. We went at the end of May and spent something over three weeks there. The Chinese figure things out for themselves, and I think they realize that I had nothing to do with screwing up that delegation and dumping it.

I wrote to them in late 1977, and told them my wife and I would like to visit China and that I would also be happy to pull together a trade union delegation. I thought I could get together a very good group of rank and filers to make the trip and I'd like very much if they would invite us.

Well, we heard nothing and I wrote to several people, including an old friend of mine in New York who had just come back from China and who had stayed at our house for a week when they got back; Irving Kaplan and his wife. They had been there for about five weeks as guests. He's a close friend of Frank Coe. Frank Coe has been living in China for a long time, and as a matter of fact, one of his children was born there.

Then I also wrote to Tomitaro Kaneda, head of the Japanese longshoremen - or was, but he has been ill and lost part of his leg to diabetes -

LG: and asked if he could give me a hand, too. I'd say that between these people enough word got to the Chinese that they were convinced that some of these things that happened sure as hell could not be attributed to me.

The net result was that they made no mention of my suggestion for a delegation. A letter came saying that "You and your wife are invited to spend two or three weeks in China in May or June." We decided to go at the end of May, hoping to avoid the hot weather, which we did; we really had an amazing three weeks in China.

(Editor's Note: The following account of the trip to China is excerpted from a formal report written by the Narrator and inserted at his request. It does not appear on the tapes.)

As to where we wanted to go and who we wanted to see and talk to, our requests in the main were met. We went to many places any visitor would want to see, such as the Great Wall, the Ming Tombs, the Forbidden City and the Summer Palace of the last Empress, including the marble boat she had built with the appropriation for the Chinese Navy.

We saw a number of archeological spots such as the Peking Man Caves, the digs at Sian and the 2000 year old, remarkably preserved old lady at Changsha, and a fine dig and restoration of a neolithic village which lived under a matriarchal society. We understood their powerful historical sense. They have a different time concept than ours - a combination of persistence and patience in what they set out to do. Very little of "I want it done yesterday", or "What have you done for me lately?"

We saw factories, schools, communes (the dominant agricultural structure), industrial exhibits, rest and recreation areas in Hangchow, the docks in Canton and Shanghai.

No Inflation

Prices are rigidly controlled, and they are the same throughout the country. There is no inflation - the standard of living is not high.

It is a hard working, very hard working society, 8 hours a day, 6 days a week, 7 holidays a year . There are no private automobiles - they are owned by the State, and assigned to various agencies and institutions. The heavy reliance is on mass transportation - railroads, busses and bicycles. The bicycle traffic in the cities is unbelievable. Mornings you hear the constant honking of horns outside the hotel. There are not that many cars, but they are honking to manage their way through the thousands of bikes. I couldn't help but think that when they manufactured a car, they built the horn first and assembled the rest of the car around it.

Safe Streets

There is no tipping. Cab drivers carry a meter and insist on giving you exact change, together with a receipt. We were told that drug traffic was stamped out and that prostitution, once a major industry, especially around the seaports, is gone. The streets are safe - you can walk them day or night, although the main problem of moving around on your own is of course the language.

Hotel doors are left open - we didn't bother to carry around our passports or money. Drinking does not seem to be a major routine.

The atmosphere in the schools was encouraging; classes are not small - about 50-60. The teachers work hard, command good respect, and problems of discipline, it is said, are infrequent. Generally there is a quiet confidence among them, and you get the feeling they will get the job done. It's an old society, and does not shake easily.

Industry Has Far To Go

In industry you see everything from modern petrol-chemical plants for gasoline refining, and the use of the oil base for every kind of by-product, to people pulling loaded carts by hand. That's when you get the full impact of how far they have to go. They have rapidly developing industries in coal, iron, steel, oil, automobiles, textiles and machine tools. There is still an enormous amount of hand work and a large handicraft industry, some of which, such as the manufacture of porcelain, has been partially mechanized.

The work on general cargo vessels was the standard hand-handling. There are no containers, although they had container terminals planned for Canton and Shanghai, and the foreign lines will probably keep pressing for them. There were bulk operations for grain and ore - a number of them quite modern. Some machines were in use in the dock area although they were not utilized in the ship's hold, or to the extent they could be in truck discharge. The unit load or palletized load does not seem to have been introduced. Long-shoremen are made up into gangs, other than dock or terminal workers, and from all indications work 8 men in the hold, 2 winch drivers, plus hatchtenders and frontmen. They seem to be paid somewhat better than many other industrial workers.

In their economic structure they work under a system of central planning where decisions are made on a national level for the allocation of capital investments to resources, industry, agri-culture, educational, cultural institutions and so forth. Wages at the work level are divided by labor grades of which there are generally eight, ranging from 35 to 40 yuan a month to start, to 80-90 at the top, depending on age, experience and skill (a yuan is worth somewhere between 65 and 70 cents, U.S.). In talks about wages, they follow what they call a "low-wage" policy. This must be a facet of rapid capital accumulation.

Improving the standard of living is seen as the country moving upward as a whole, so that while improvement is slow, it is spread more evenly.

Target Date Is A.D. 2000

They have general economic goals, some with termination dates in 10 years to 1985, and the main target date the year 2000. By then they plan to be a modern, industrialized country, developed by highly improved agricultural methods, trained scientists and technicians and strengthened national defenses. Again you feel their time sense.

One aspect of the trip that didn't work out was my effort to see and talk to the leaders of the All China Federation of Trade Unionists in Peking. They had not functioned as an organization for almost 12 years. A National Congress was planned for October 1978, and the reason given for the inability to arrange a session was that they were busy preparing for the Congress.

Revolutionary Problems

On the provincial level we spent a lot of time with trade unionists. Provincial trade union congresses were being planned to be held prior to the national meeting, so that policy, program and personnel to be recommended at the national congress were still being debated. But the question arises, how is it that the All China Federation of Trade Unions didn't function for a period of 12 years? and to what extent did the same thing happen at a provincial or local level and for what reasons?

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was triggered by Mao Tse Tung in 1966, and although he turned it on, apparently no one knew how to turn it off. There was talk as early as 1969 that the job of overhauling the work ethics, fighting bureaucracy and arrogance, revamping the social system and institutions and combatting tendencies toward what they call bourgeois methods had been

adequately debated; however, the upheaval didn't stop but rather continued in many places through 1976, as in the case of the reconstitution of the All China Federation of Trade Unions, which they planned to put together again later that year.

During this period there were major changes in in the work-place. These were not uniform. For example, in some provinces, such as Hunan or the city of Shanghai, many of the unions within the plants didn't function to all intents and purposes, for a span of five to ten years. In most cases, revolutionary committees took over on the plant level, committees made up of workers, technicians and the Communist party.

In the case of schools and universities, the revolution took the form of putting ideological loyalty and revolutionary understanding in top priority, with education second. For instance it took the symbolic form of a student turning in a blank exam paper.

At the factory level it had the powerful pull of egalitarianism and syndicalism. This of course is a deep seated feeling among workers everywhere, and not too different from what we ourselves are familiar with, where large numbers of workers feel that the top managerial structure, together with their lieutenants, have themselves a soft job, and don't know as much about the operation as the workers.

In a number of places, both the unions and to some extent the Communist party structure were replaced by the revolutionary committees. In an effort to find out more about what had gone on, I decided to ask individuals with whom I talked as to what happened to them during this period.

In some plants the leadership of unions went back to the work bench. Anywhere from 5 to 10 years. In another plant, the director went back to work for some 5 years, although they then decided he was a fairly competent man and he returned to his post. In another city - Canton, for example - changes did not take this form in unions, and the factory structure remained pretty much intact. Now they are in the process of re-gearing the various institutions, and in the main, reverting to more traditional types of organization.

As I stated above, the Great Proletarian Revolution extended for a much longer period than I had originally understood. It merged into a struggle against what was considered to be a bourgeois managerial line. It merged with a political struggle that continued well into the 1970s, and which they refer to as a fight around the "Gang of Four". There is no question that the whole leadership were getting along in years. Three of the great old-timers died in 1976 - Chou Enlai, Chu Teh, and Mao Tse Tung. It could be that the question of successorship had begun to shape up.

When I asked if this whole period of upheaval was worthwhile, the answer was immediately, "Yes". Chairman Mao had launched the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, yet if pressed on the issue, they will tell you the country will be going through a period of re-evaluation and review. There was undoubtedly a lasting impact, and some of the benefits will be better communications between party people and workers, greater sensitivity to peoples' needs, and a keener awareness of the dangers of bureaucracy or arrogance at the top.

How could a country absorb this upheaval so shortly after the liberation, and the taking of power by the new government in 1949? After all, shortly after liberation they were involved in the Korean War, which went until 1953; after that there were some 13 years of construction, to 1966 - and then the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution got under way, and in some cases lasted as much as 12 years. However, they took it in stride, and are back building their society.

Role Of The Unions

It is my feeling that the role of the unions has not been completely defined or worked out. Of course, unions in a socialist country play a different role from ours in this economic system. When you question specific functions, they emphasize the welfare of the individual worker,

education undertakings, including classes and political understanding - to some extent sports, and a number of things we would ascribe to welfare. Under their constitution, workers have the right to strike. In matters of safety which can't be disposed of quickly and where someone would be endangered - such as faulty running gear on a ship - they have the right to stop work.

Questions such as wages and other benefits that would accrue from productivity in the workplace are planned at the national level, although they insist there is a good deal of debate, including feeding the plans or ideas down below, and then reviewing the issues constantly until there is general agreement, so that the wage question as such is not a matter of bargaining.

Perhaps the most encouraging word about the unions was the statement that there will be a period of re-evaluation of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. I don't see how some of these developments can be lost in any way. Obviously the impact on individuals who went back to the work bench for a number of years will not be readily forgotten. On that score it seems to me the reconstitution of the unions by some retooling might very well be called for.

Use Of Incentives

Another thing that became evident is that there is a lot of discussion and even varied planning on the institution of incentives, or the way it's put, "moral encouragement and material rewards."

For example, in Canton we had a long discussion on incentives with the trade unionists, including those in the harbor. They plan to put them into effect where the range could be anywhere from 70 yuan a month to 120. The present average wage they say is around 80. As in most countries I visited, longshoremen are somewhat higher paid on the whole than other workers. Under the incentive plan, if effectuated, a worker might get as much as 10 yuan less than the previous

average under some circumstances. On the other hand, through incentives he could earn as much as an additional 50 percent over the base - 120 yuan a month.

I mentioned some of the rather well known pitfalls in incentives, namely the tendency of longshore gangs to segregate by young men and older men, conflicts between workers on the job, and almost continuous dickering on incentives - very common in England and France - encouragement of speedup and taking shortcuts even when they are hazardous. They said they were aware of these problems, but thought they could be handled.

I asked what supervision was getting, such as walking bosses - brigade leaders - and they said around 80 yuan a month. When asked what would happen to them if the workers in the brigade were making the maximum, far in excess of the brigade leaders, they said they would have to "cross that bridge when they got to it" or take it up at the end of the year.

In the port of Shanghai they obviously are making plans to introduce incentives with a slightly different approach. In that case they said the average wage was around 70 a month. Under the incentive plan they have in mind the worker would not get less than his base nor would he have this wide range of payments which could go up to 50 percent of base, as in Canton. In Shanghai they thought the maximum incentive bonus would be around 12 yuan a month. It could be they intend to try out both plans and see which one works better.

In Shanghai we spent a long time talking about the use of forklifts around the docks, and I promised them some material from the west coast on fork lift utilization in dock operations, warehouses and the holds of ships, as well as at manufacturing plants for the loading of trucks. This seems comparatively simple, readily introduced, and which can be standardized throughout.

No Grievance Procedure

In the area of grievances I was quite stumped in my efforts to find out what would be done about grievances on the job, such as classification, rate of production, etc. The best I could determine was that these could be resolved with the director of the plant. There was no mention of any formal or regular grievance procedure. It could be that in the light of recent years, communications are such that they can be taken in stride. It does strike me, however, that over any period of time the failure to have grievance machinery could well build up a backlog of serious dissent.

I came away with the strong feeling that our union policies over the years toward China have been sound and worth pursuing; 900 million people aren't going to disappear or go away. China is a proud country, standing on its own feet. In keeping with ILWU convention policies on the People's Republic of China, everything that can be done to bring about normalization of relations - recognizing also their basic sovereignty over the province of Taiwan and the promotion of trade and friendship - is sound, and should be pursued.

This was a fascinating trip. Naturally I appreciate the hospitality and consideration extended to my wife and me. It was a great opportunity to see many new things and to learn something about another part of the world.

(End Of Insert)

Ward: Does that wind up the China situation for the moment, then?

LG: Well, while Terry and I were in China we were asked by one of the people who was taking us around, a Comrade Fu, whether I could pull together a small leadership delegation from the American trade union movement; a broad group, if possible, and not a very large group, to visit China.

LG: I said I would try to do so. Since I've been back that is one of the things I've spent some time on and at the present moment there is a group which is prepared to go. I'm making sure that it goes at the right time, and whether that turns out to be feasible, I don't know.

Ward: You want to tell who?

LG: Yes, the group that would go would be William Winpisinger, the national president of the Machinists Union, a very outspoken man; I think he's one of the real bright lights on the labor horizon; or Eugene Glover, their national secretary-treasurer; Stan Jensen, vice-president of the Machinists on the West Coast, and a good man; Tim Twomey, vice-president of the Service Employees International Union or Keith Johnson, president of the IWA (International Woodworkers of America); Jim McLaughlin, Vice-President of the Retail Clerks Union, which is now merging with the Butchers; and Tony Ramos, who is head of the State Council of Carpenters. This group has agreed to go if we can get the date set for May 18. So, I have written the All-China Federation of Trade Unions for its reply.

XXXVIII THE AGE LIMIT PLOY

(Interview 39: 19 December 1978)

The 65-Year Rule

Ward: Lou, we were going to talk about the 65 age limit proposition.

LG: That's right. I have already told you about the attempt in 1971 to impose a 63-year age limitation which could be interpreted by the convention in only one way; a proposition which died lousy.

Then, in Hawaii, Local 142 at one of their earlier conventions had adopted a 65-year rule, namely if a person was under 65, he could run for one more term, even though it extended beyond the age 65, but then he could no longer run for office after that. The Hawaii delegation came into the 1975 convention in Canada with this proposition and asked the individual officers how they felt about it.

There was a good deal of inner controversy, particularly in Warehouse. Warehouse people - Curt McClain was the most outspoken - were opposed to any kind of 65 year rule, feeling that it was a phoney and would do no good in the long pull. If somebody was equipped to do a job, they ought to be doing that job and should be there even if they were 65.

I understood what they were saying: you don't measure those things by just chronological age. When it came my turn to respond to the question

LG: raised by the guys from Hawaii, I told them I favored the 65 year rule; there had to be times for changes of leadership, when new blood moved into the union and into leadership; that the 65 year rule to my mind made some sense and was entirely different from the manner it had been posed in 1971; I would go along with it.

Notwithstanding what I had to say, some still voted against it. But it carried, just by voice vote. The 65 year rule was adopted. The convention was somewhere around April or May, and my birthdate is in June. The motion was adopted that insofar as the present officers were concerned, they could run for one more term. And of course this would apply to Harry and myself.

Ward: And what about the vice-presidents? Did this apply?

LG: Right, but in the cases of George Martin and Bill Chester, they were not under the gun. The interesting developments that occurred were around the 1977 convention, because prior to that convention a lot of things had happened, particularly the sugar bonus beef. This had become a difficult and open dispute between Harry and myself, one which he wouldn't let go of, no matter how overwhelming the facts which showed that his position had been wrong. If we had followed it we would have made a major mistake.

I guess some of these discussions became more than just nettlesome to some of the Hawaii guys. They thought they were being booted around by this kind of a controversy. They decided they had done the right thing, and after all they did have local autonomy like everybody else. This business of somebody constantly chewing at them after they had made their decision, after they had gone through all the democratic procedure, all this stuff was in complete violation of the things that we ourselves had told them.

In some of the crazy machinations when Harry made the rounds of some of the plantations in 1974, before he decided to oppose the 1974 strike settlement, he had a strong personal friendship with one individual on a single large plantation

LG: on Maui, Vierra, the self-appointed leader of the rank and file. Harry, apparently, decided to invite Vierra to come to San Francisco when the sugar caucus met in 1976; and he did so without consulting the local leadership or the committee.

That really got under the skin of the Hawaii guys. Here were the good, solid, loyal guys who had worked as a disciplined group through the negotiations and had stood up on all the issues. They are the ones who stay in Hawaii, and the guy who is given a trip to San Francisco is the man who raises the most hell. You see, the squeaky wheel gets the grease.

Comments were coming back to me; a guy would say, "Christ, any time you want a trip to San Francisco, all we have to do is raise a little hell. Just take a negative position for a while and then be invited to San Francisco to have our minds changed." These remarks were not being said in good humor. The whole thing had a bad turn to it.

As a matter of fact, later on in those negotiations Vierra was giving all kinds of examples that there had been incursions on our work by the plantation sub-contracting out certain small jobs. He made the thing sound as though it was a genuine grievance. We finally said, "Look, before we settle, we're not going to let these things go away; they are important; we'll do this with on-the-spot committees."

The first place the committee went was to the plantation where Vierra worked, and when it came to giving specific examples, he fell flat on his face. They were mostly things from the top of his head, things so miniscule that no one could put a finger on them.

Finally, a lot of things were going on at the same time. Prior to the 1977 convention - although some of this stuff occurred after the '77 convention - like the strike - I got a call from Hawaii from Newton Miyagi and Carl Demaso - Demaso is the president of the local and Miyagi is the secretary - saying that they had changed their minds.

LG: They thought the ruling on age 65 ought to be changed; that perhaps a mistake had been made, and it ought to be changed for at least another term. What did I think about it? I wasn't sure myself whether this was a Tinker-to-Evers-to-Chance . . . .

Ward: Oh, that's the old baseball play -

LG: That's right; whether Harry had changed his mind about retirement and had gone to Local 142. But that was not terribly important to me - I thought that the 65-year rule should be enforced, not because the rule per se was such a good thing, but if the situation continued in the International our union could only go down hill.

Harry's determination to wash the union out, either by merger with the ILA or in some fashion bringing it back into the AFofL, was so blatant, one which he kept hammering away at constantly. He became more and more outspoken that the union had no place to go. Frankly, I'd really had it in terms of just plain fatigue; fighting the employers, the government, other enemies of the ILWU; that in itself is . . . .

Ward: Quite a chore?

LG: Is a chore. But not nearly as tough a chore as fighting under circumstances where somebody is constantly needling you or stepping on your heels, breathing down your neck, or putting out a foot now and then to see if he can trip you up. The combination was a bit more than I wanted.

I could have gone another four years, but I didn't feel I really had the same amount of steam. How much the heart surgery took out of me, I don't know. Psychologically it does take out a lot, no question about that. I don't think I was the ideal patient when it came to taking the right amount of time off or following a routine of exercises.

So I asked the Hawaii guys, "Well, what does Harry have to say about this?" "Harry says he's waiting for your answer; that the local has the

LG: right to do whatever it pleases." So, I said, "Well, I'll think about it. I'll write you a letter instead of talking on the phone." So, I thought about it for a few days, and decided the wisest thing to do was to send . . .

Ward: Send a letter to Hawaii - not to Harry?

Goldblatt Calls The Turn

LG: To Hawaii - right. I wrote them a letter saying that as any autonomous local in the ILWU, it had the right to change its mind. However, there was all the difference in the world between changing one's mind and arbitrarily coming in at the next convention and without giving any reason seeking to reverse the 65-year rule, because they have a lot of votes.

There's no question Hawaii had the votes to carry it, for as far as Warehouse was concerned, the chances were a good majority would go along. I thought that the obligation which really rested on them was they they allow an opportunity for other locals to review the thing with them on a completely friendly basis.

My suggestion was that they ask for the convening of an enlarged executive board meeting, not an uncommon thing in our union. We've had enlarged executive board meetings periodically, either on crisis situations or presidential nominations.

What happens is that the executive board and all the major locals , and the smaller locals who can afford it, are invited to come to the meeting. Nothing done at the enlarged executive board meeting is final or binding - it is merely a recommendation back to the locals.

I said, "An enlarged executive board meeting will give the other locals a chance to ask questions as to why you changed your mind, why you think there ought to be a switch in this policy. When it is all over with you can thank

LG: them all for listening, but you've changed your mind, and you're going to go ahead and try to change the rule. No harm done."

I said that then the feeling would be that they weren't being yanked around; it would be within the democratic structure of the ILWU as we have always known it. Harry wrote a brief note to them simply saying, "You have the right to do as you please." Well, anyway, they decided they did not want an enlarged executive board meeting because at such a meeting other things were bound to come out.

Ward: Like what?

LG: Like the whole thing that happened on sugar, and so forth. Sugar finally emerged at the convention anyway, through Harry dissenting from one section of the officers' report. But the enlarged executive board meeting was never asked by Local 142.

Ward: Well, if that change had been made, that would have meant that Harry and you could have continued on in more or less whatever fashion you wanted?

LG: Yes, that's right.

Ward: But you thought this would be disruptive to the union?

LG: I didn't see anything to be gained by it, really. It wasn't a business of sacrificing myself on the cross. I didn't feel I had the strength and energy that ought to go into the job. I thought the combination of circumstances were more than was warranted. I'm a hard worker and I believe in people working hard, particularly union officials; coasting the job is something I have nothing but contempt for.

Ward: Well, I've heard it said by Warehouse guys that they have felt for a long time that whatever you said, Harry vetoed; and whatever Harry said, you vetoed, and that the International had been stuck in the middle.

LG: It didn't work out that way, really. There were sharp differences, of course, but you couldn't say he exercised a veto power in the true sense of the word.

He did on many issues, yes. When it came to things like getting mixed up in the youth movement, then of course he could exercise considerable veto power, because a great deal depends on what the individual issues are going to be. A lot of individuals might do something, might adopt resolutions, but as to how much steam the union leaders put into the thing is another story.

I can cite, for example, the Vietnam Day demonstrations - the time that Harry was invited to speak at the demonstration which wound up at Kezar. He decided he didn't want to talk there; we finally got Chili, who spoke there instead.

We were invited to have a speaker at the huge parade that wound up at the Polo Grounds, a very big and effective demonstration. There was a good-sized turnout from the ILWU and they invited Harry to speak, and again he refused. Later on, he justified his action on the grounds that one black speaker had made some pretty wild statements about Nixon.

So, in other words, that becomes a veto form if you want to put it that way, but when it came to basic union policy, there was no veto. True, when I was participating in the Council for Health Plan Alternatives and the question came along of making some small contribution - I think it was $3,600 a year for maintenance; we didn't get much dough from the unions to keep the thing going - Harry would speak out against it.

But it invariably carried in our board over Harry's opposition. So, you can't really say it was a veto thing. When it came to Warehouse negotiations there was no question as to my role; I had responsibility for Local 6, and also I went down to Los Angeles to help them in the Warehouse negotiations with things like the Wholesale Drug Company and Thrifty negotiations. When it came to my relations with Hawaii, there definitely was no veto power.

Ward: You mean Harry had no veto power there?

LG: No. Harry had influence with the guys. After all, nobody would forget that not only was there support for Harry when he was convicted in the 1950 trial, there was a shutdown in Hawaii. Everything was shut down in protest. They don't forget things like that, and they don't forget the kind of support they got from the west coast longshoremen. There was a close, really warm fraternal relationship between the west coast and Hawaii.

So you can't say that he had no friends there. But when it came to basic policy over the years, I'd say the guys listened primarily to Jack Hall. Without any question he was the sort of indispensible participant in the whole thing.

In negotiations and a lot of the tactical questions involved, some of the theoretical problems as to where we were going, then in all cases I would be consulted either by phone or by mail, and I would take a trip down there. But I wouldn't call that a veto power, any more than I had veto power in Longshore negotiations.

Ward: But you had influence?

LG: That's right, I would attend and I would sometimes be in opposition to Harry, like take the case of the containers, where I felt all of our attention was in the wrong direction, because fundamentally, it was the employers who decided which way the work was done. Of course in some areas there were some very serious clashes, particularly on what I thought was a complete washout on the attempt to get some unity with the ILA.

Ward: Well, to summarize, it seems to me that by pointing out some of the difficulties involved in Hawaii's attempt to change the 65-year rule, you and Harry were bowing out in the 1977 convention.

LG: Yes, I called the turn.

Ward: Well, I guess there isn't much more to say on that phase of leadership conflicts.

LG: Yes, I guess we have pretty well covered that.

The Office Boss

Ward: Now, insofar as your role as an employer is concerned, I've heard staff members say that they liked you personally, but you were a son-of-a-bitch to work for.

LG: I don't know what they meant about "son-of-a-bitch to work for," or an 's.o.b.,' when it came to labor negotiations or a stickler on getting the job done. That all depends on . . . .

Ward: Well, one who said that was Virginia Woods. I wonder if the brown rice situation in Hawaii had anything to do with her opinion?

LG: No, I think I told her the whole story; she might have gotten a little bit upset about it. It was an interesting sidelight, and fundamentally I thought Virginia was right. As a matter of fact, I thought brown rice was a better food than white. That worked out all right. I don't think there was anything bad.

As a matter of fact, Virginia was very easy to work with - very competent and very hard-working. And she was with us when it just seemed to be one crisis after another, during the formative days of the State CIO.

Ward: Virginia could have made that remark, not so much about you as about the pressures of the office.

LG: Yes, that could be true; the pressures of the office were enormous. I don't think we even thought in terms of overtime pay. The whole attitude in terms of what you were paid and what hours you worked was quite different than today.

Ward: There was a cause involved, too?

LG: There was a big cause involved, a tremendous driving movement; nobody was watching the clock. You did the work that had to be done, that's all. We didn't have a big staff, you see.

Ward: Did you run into the problem of the working woman who has to go home and cook dinner or something, and the boss comes in at quarter to five with two hours worth of dictation?

LG: I had a tendency to do that; on that score I wasn't a very good employer because it was quite common for me to start trying to clean up my desk by dictating a lot of letters. The daytime is taken up with telephone calls, meetings and what have you. So, you do have a tendency to let those things drag, and you do take advantage of the office staff, probably. Where I got the reputation as a difficult and impossible employer was in negotiations with the Office Workers Union.

Ward: I was going to ask you about that.

LG: The office workers decided to organize, which is okay with us, of course. I thought they should belong to the ILWU, but they didn't want to; it would be a company union. And at one time, I think they tried to join Local 3 of the Office Workers Union and I don't think Local 3 wanted them. Local 3 - Phyllis Mitchell - that's a sort of tight little outfit.

Ward: Yes, she was a pretty anti-liberal, anti-left?

LG: Yes. They went into the Oakland local, Local 29, and George Kinnock was the head of this local. The greatest objective they had in the world was to see how good a contract they could negotiate with the ILWU.

Ward: They figured the union would be a soft touch, of course.

LG: I was very cold on the thing and I guess what used to drive them up the wall, partially because I was up the wall myself and I was going to make sure they got there too. I said, "I refuse to play the role of the employer, because I'm not."

At that time they had joint negotiations; they represented the office workers in the International office, in Local 6, Local 10, and Local 34. I said, "It's true that I sign the paychecks, but

LG: I'm not an employer. I am the custodian of the membership's money; that's your employer. I'm not going to be put in the same spot as an employer."

Ward: You didn't profit from their employment?

LG: Correct. There's not going to be a direct relationship between wages and the International officers. I said, the question of the officers' salaries is determined by the convention. If the union has no dough, we'll have to continue paying the office workers even though we cut off the officers.

When it comes to hiring people, our attitude is that we have to pay the going rate. When we hire a newspaperman like Morris Watson we have to pay him the rate that is called for the job.

Ward: They wanted more than the going rate; wasn't that part of the problem?

LG: Well, the technique on their part was that (a) because we were a union, we ought to pay more; (b) if we paid more it would set a good example for other workers to join. I replied that they should give us the going rate of the Bank of America, which we knew they were trying to organize, or give us the going rate down at Metropolitan, which they tried to organize, and we would compare these.

No - no; they weren't interested in that. They claimed that other union offices were paying more. Whether this is true or not, I don't know. I felt our union tried to pay above what the general rate of office employees and the so-called union rate; also working conditions of our general structure ought to be better, and they were.

When it came to the question of benefits, vacations, sick leave and accumulation of sick leave, things of that sort, there I thought we ought to pay more. But this was never quite enough; they had to win something. Finally I said, "Look, if you bargain on that basis there's nothing much to bargain. To bargain in a case like that, you walk in to the employer and say, 'I'm not going to

LG: spend any time here telling you; we're just tough enough to get it.' If you are you can walk out and keep things shut down."

Ward: There was some strike talk at one time, wasn't there?

LG: Yes, there was some strike talk, and a strike that was over some crazy mix-up that had taken place somewhere else, but then it spread to the entire outfit. And during the strike, our position was very simple. We intended to continue our work as officers, didn't intend to replace any of them with strikebreakers, or anything like that.

We would do our own work, plug in the telephone and take the messages. If we can't type a letter, we'll just handle it over the phone. And that is the way it was. As a matter of fact, some of the guys were bitter because they had struck. The office workers felt that their weapon of settling a strike was that the union could never stand that kind of publicity; the ILWU, this great progressive union, being struck. In some ways, it really did get under my skin, pretty bad.

Ward: How about little things like day to day . . . .?

LG: When it came to day to day work, I don't believe in strong supervision; I believe in good workers. Once I felt we had a competent worker, I never saw any need for close supervision. Somebody like Martha Amyes, a very competent office manager; the amount of supervision she had from me you could put in your eye; as a matter of fact, there was too damn little, if anything.

I would get together with her maybe a few hours at the time the financial report had to be made to the executive board, or when we had to put together the financial report for the convention; or when the question arose as to whether or not we needed per capita increases. Other than that she was pretty much in charge of the office, handled things her own way.

LG: I did think people ought to report on time. Every once in a while I'd say, "Put up a sign-up sheet;" but most of the time, I didn't bother to have the sign-up sheets around. When it came to people taking time off, sick leave can be taken if one of the children is ill or the husband is home ill and there is no one else to take care of him. On that score I don't see where we had any beefs.

The work week was a 35 hour work week; they thought it ought to be less. And I said, "Look, you can have less than that when the prevailing work week in San Francisco gets to 35 hours a week."

Ward: Yes, I remember that - I don't remember what I was doing - I was in 150 Golden Gate one morning before nine o'clock. I was coming down the stairs and you were coming up the stairs exactly on the nose at 9 o'clock, and noticing that there were no office workers around. You were checking up on them.

LG: Well, I thought the office should be opened at nine o'clock. For a long time we conducted a schedule which was 9:00 a.m. to 5:30. Officers didn't necessarily come in at 9:00, depending on late meetings. Generally, we worked until 5:30, sometimes until 6:00. I wanted the switchboard open from 9:00 to 5:30 because you invariably got calls after 5:00.

There were certain things about the office which I insisted upon, and on some scores I got into some rather crazy situations at the office. There was this whole big battle for equal rights, as though the ILWU needed a special lesson in that. One of the women in the office, Ernestine Gatewood, worked in the mailing room. She was a clerk, filing, mailing, mimeographing; she decided she wanted to be a secretary.

There was an opening for secretary and she applied for it. I said, "Well, could she take shorthand?" Yes, she could take shorthand. Her word was not enough for me; I decided to give her a test. I didn't talk at my usual rate of speed, which is pretty fast, but I cut it down to a very moderate rate of speed, something like 60 words a minute.

LG: I came down on a Saturday morning and gave her the test, so that there would not be any pressure of the office around. I had her type it up; hell, she could take shorthand about as well as I could. So, I said, "I'm sorry, but the job isn't yours, that's all."

Christ, she carried this thing into the party and all kinds of places. Let me tell you one of the hilarious sidelights of the situation. She later turned up before the un-American Activities Committee in San Diego; that was where she came from.

Ward: Was she black?

LG: Yes, black, and she talked about this thing and that person. They asked her about the ILWU and was I a Communist? And she said, "Hell, no, he won't take orders from anybody - he's impossible!" (laughter) All she could remember was that she never got the goddam job. So things like that do occur - situations where people would sort of rock along on the job. We had some rather nice people work for us.

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Ward: We were talking about Martha and people not coming to work on time - things like that.

LG: You couldn't say that about Martha - Martha was always very prompt. But I think we were always very lucky when I look back over the years; we had people like Virginia Woods, Florence Atkinson, Gladys Hare, Nellie Walsh.

Ward: Nellie was there a long, long time.

LG: Yes; she was out for a while when she was raising some kids, and then she came back; even people like Jean Gundlach. We had a very good staff, very dedicated, in the main.

Ward: I'm curious about Ella Hutch (a member of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors). How do they work that? Does she work part-time?

LG: She works part-time, yes.

Ward: She became a public figure while you were still active in the union.

LG: Yes, although there was a bit of a run-in with Ella Hutch. She ran for BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) board of directors and got elected. There was no love lost between her and Bill Chester. Bill Chester had been appointed to BART, but he decided not to run. Hutch did run and she got elected.

Ward: I heard that he made it difficult for Ella to get time off to attend BART meetings; and that he established some sort of a rule which would keep her from attending.

LG: If she wanted to attend a BART meeting, that was no great problem. But there was a caucus in town, and she said something about having a BART meeting. I said, "Well, you'll have to forget it today because the caucus is meeting and you never know when they might want a resolution mimeographed at once." The customary thing is, a guy gets up and makes a motion and then someone says, "I don't want to vote on it until I see it in writing." Then we had to send it over and get the thing mimeographed, get copies made.

Next thing I know I'm leaving for lunch and here's some reporter from KQED (the local public television station) asking me "What about Ella Hutch?", and I said, "What about Ella Hutch?" He said, "Well, you're opposed to her serving on BART," and I said, "I don't know what you're talking about. I have a caucus on - forget it." And later on, here's a picture of Ella before the building making a long speech that her work had been done, and so forth and so on.

I caught Ella that afternoon; I figured something fishy was going on. I said, "Look, Ella, the family problems we have, we settle them here. When you start saying that you had all your work done to go to a BART meeting . . . ." As far as I was concerned her ILWU job came first. If her BART job came first, let her take a full-time job with BART. I never get that overwhelmed by . .

Ward: What did Ella do? What was her function? She was on the switchboard a good deal of the time, wasn't she?

LG: She was on the switchboard part of the time and she also ran the mimeograph room. And she was a competent person when it came to running the mimeograph room and doing jobs of that sort.

Ward: She was not a secretary?

LG: No. Harry made a big to-do about the thing. He wanted the phone yanked out of her office, which he said she was using on private calls, and he did not want her on the switchboard any more, even though it was a switchboard where nobody could listen in on all kinds of things. I just set my heels and announced I wasn't going to join in anything of that sort; I wasn't going to let this thing proliferate into a bigger beef than it was.

That was a cheap hit, no question about that; this crappy business of having some guy from KQED with the empty chair, you know; the horse with the empty saddle - chicken-shit stuff. So, it didn't mean all that much. You know, you can go on and on about office workers. Right now they're plotting the revolution down at the union. I wish they would fight the revolution some place . . . .

Ward: And organize the Bank of America?

LG: Right.

XXXIX THE FOND FAREWELLS

The Dinner For Harry

Ward: Okay, let's talk about the farewell dinners. I remember attending - as a guest of the (ILWU) law firm, which provided the tickets for my wife and myself at $50 a crack - Harry's banquet, and I remember seeing you sitting up there like you had been frozen solid in a seated position at the speaker's table.

LG: Yes, as a matter of fact, I was sitting next to Monsignor Connolly of the Apostleship of the Sea, and Dick Gladstein was seated on the other side.

My feelings about the dinner were that Harry was entitled to it in many ways, but it was a funny way of getting a lot of people, including the city itself, to apologize for a lot of previous injustices, a lot of name-calling, a lot of red-baiting and everything else. It was not a dinner that I thought really was a working class dinner; what surprised me most was when I saw this program that was put out.

Ward: I think everybody blushed at that thing.

LG: That thing was just plain embarrassing.

Ward: Greetings from Joe Bananas (nickname for an alleged Mafia member) and . . . .

LG: Over the years we've known all about these programs. . . .

Ward: The shipowners, this firm and that firm.

LG: And they are the kind of things where some of the PR (public relations) guys in town can make a buck on Labor Day. I don't know if you recall the periodic special Labor Day editions that we used to have in every newspaper, and particularly in the county labor journals, where these guys would go out and sell ads. How much they took off the top I don't know.

Ward: I gather that the people who organized the banquet on Harry's behalf made some arrangement for the professionals to . . . .

LG: There was some professional outfit; I think it was from Nevada. I mean, this was just one of those typical shake-down programs; all the shipowners here and there.

Ward: The shipowners and some firm owned by Joe Bonnano, who is a racketeer.

LG: Well, I didn't even look at the thing that closely. I guess what bothered me the most was the tone of the whole thing. This was not a labor dinner in any sense of the word. People like Helen Bentley (of the Federal Maritime Commission). When she started talking I remember turning to Father Connolly and saying, "My god, she should have come in on a broomstick!" And he said, "Yes, it would have been more appropriate." The whole tenor of her remarks included some of them in very bad taste, about how Harry discussed his personal problems about his children.

And then the politicians, the big wheels. I'm trying to recall whether he had anybody from the ranks, or any of the old-timers. Chester was chairing the banquet. Jimmy Herman talked, yes . .

Ward: Jerry Bulcke was there - he was the only '34 guy.

LG: Yes, Jerry was there but he didn't say anything. I don't know if Frank Hendricks was there; I think he was. I thought the saddest part was when Harry, for some reason or other, started asking for Henry Schmidt to stand up. Henry was not there. Joe Murphy, who is an old friend of ours; he wasn't there.

LG: And then the windup of the thing was like a Fellini movie, with somebody wheeling in this automobile and honking the horn on the goddam thing; all the people from Ed Flynn of the employers to others, presenting resolutions of appreciation.

Ward: Some of those ads from the shipowners saying, "Thank you, Harry" really split me.

LG: I don't know; I just walked out of there and I shook hands with Harry and I said, "Well, you wanted the dinner," and he had the most quizzical look on his face. I think he knew the whole thing laid an egg.

Ward: Well, financially, quite a lot of people were there; one hell of a crowd.

LG: No question about it, one hell of a crowd.

Ward: But not really many real labor people.

LG: No. The way they got the labor people was that they sold a lot of the tickets and said, "Look, if you're not using the tickets, just send some of them back, as long as we get the price for them." Then they gave them to some of the guys like the pensioners. I saw a number of the pensioners there.

Ward: It's somewhat similar to the way I got there.

LG: To tell you the truth I didn't buy a ticket; there were that many floating around. It was a sad occasion in some ways.

Ward: Harry's speech; I paid closer attention to Harry than to the other speakers. He said, "People say I've changed - I learned something." Then he gave credit for his learning to Paul St. Sure, who was his alma mater, so to speak; that was interesting.

LG: A logical outcome. Maybe that was an appropriate dinner. I've always felt there's only one guy for whom there ever should have been a labor dinner, but never was; that was Jimmy Higgins.

Ward: Well, anyway, also I noticed that aside from the fact that Nikki Bridges sat at the speakers' table, there was no mention made of family.

LG: I think he did make some mention of the family.

The Affair For Lou

Ward: Well, some time later there was this affair for you at the Irish Hall. I remember Dave Jenkins moaning about the fact that you called up and said, "Now, look Dave, if you are organizing this thing, I don't want you to have politicians or any employers."

LG: Yes; when the guys came to me about having an affair, I said, "Well, it might be a nice idea in many ways; I have a lot of friends who'd like to come." But I did not want any affair at one of the hotels; as far as I knew I had paid all my bills at the Mark Hopkins or the Fairmont and I didn't owe them anything.

Secondly, I didn't want any politicians; and third, I didn't want any employers. Some employers did turn up, like Smarden from the Distributors Association and Murray Parker from the Employers Council, but what I wanted were the people I knew, friends of mine.

Ward: One thing that was noticeable was there was no speaker's table, as such; there was no dais.

LG: I didn't want any of that.

Ward: Everything that happened, happened right from the level with everybody else; that was deliberate, I suppose.

LG: Yes - I didn't want any of this fancy horse-shit. The speakers I hoped for were there, although one of them got there too late; but people like Karl Yoneda, because of my background with him and the Japanese internment centers; Edith Jenkins, an old friend; Curt McClain and Keith Eichman were speakers, Local 6 members and warehousemen; Indian

LG: Joe Morris turned up there, who had this picture painted for me because he was very fond of me. During the time these Indians were having this beef on Alcatraz, I was helping them out as best I could. So, he turned up, and Al Costa from the Teamsters Union; members of the Northern California Warehouse Council. I thought the whole thing was a very comfortable affair.

Ward: There were people there, of course, that I didn't know, but it was pretty obvious that these were shop stewards and their wives, or husbands as the case may be. People were there who were a bit younger than you or me - a lot of folks from the shops, from the houses.

LG: Oh, yes; from the Warehouse local in the main; some from Local 17, Local 11.

Ward: And Hawaii.

LG: Yes, there were a couple of people there from Hawaii, but there was no effort to bring in people from all the locals; I didn't see any need for that kind of thing.

Ward: Your family was there.

LG: Yes, almost all of the family was there; my brother, my sister, my sister-in-law. Lee and Ann were there, and even David King, Ann's ex-husband, was there; he wanted to be there. Harry Kingman was there, and I was delighted to see him.

Well, it was that kind of an affair. The one speaker who didn't get there on time was Dolores Huerta of the United Farm Workers. Curt said, "She's late as usual, so we'd better forget it." By that time, there had been enough speakers anyway.

Ward: Do you remember the speculation in Herb Caen's column prior to your dinner as to whether Harry would attend?

LG: No, I don't recall that.

Ward: Yes, he had a squib in there saying that due to the well-known unfriendliness between you guys it was questionable whether Harry would attend.

LG: Oh, he was there; Chester was there, the two of them, together with Henning, (of the California Federation of Labor) were sitting at one table. And I thought Curt McClain handled the thing with very good taste; like in the case of Harry and Bill Chester, what Curt did was have leis presented to Nikki and to Ethel Chester and to George Martin's wife, Dorothy, which I thought made a lot of sense.

Ward: Oh, yes, well, I had a nice feeling about it; I felt the place wasn't papered.

LG: No, it wasn't papered.

Ward: I know we paid for our own tickets and everybody else did.

LG: Oh, yes, there might have been a few pensioners there. Oh, I remember the crack in Herb Caen's column; not about that. Herb called Terry; he wanted to talk to me about something but I wasn't home; he asked Terry, "How come it's at the Irish Cultural Center?" And Terry said, "Well, it's across from the Zoo and if people don't like it they can go over and see the other primates."

Ward: I remember that crack. Well, is there anything else about your banquet that you want to talk about?

LG: No, except that it provided enough money so that Terry and I could take the trip to China. The members of the committee said, "How do you expect to get an automobile with $25 tickets?" I said, "Well, let's settle for a motorcycle."

Ward: The fact was that the tab was within reach of the ordinary worker. It was a good thing, I thought, and your speech was - you didn't have to say "I've changed." - which to me was very important.

LG: I didn't think I had to.

The Daughters

Ward: Okay, let's talk about the family for a minute. Here you had all these girls growing up, and it was pretty much Terry's job, wasn't it?

LG: In the main, yes, because I was away a lot of the time; as a matter of fact, the kids were quite hostile about it, after a while.

Ward: When they were teen-aged?

LG: Particularly, yes, and even around eight or nine. Then during those ugly fifties, the McCarthy hearings and so forth, they were afraid I was going to get arrested. They were convinced, sometimes, that when I had gone away I was really in jail; that they were not being told the whole truth.

There was a constant feeling, when we lived on Ashbury Terrace, about the harassment; some of it just occurs among kids, and some because we lived in a very Catholic neighborhood. In other words, most of the other kids went to St. Agnes School, while our kids went to public school.

Ward: So, you were in a situation for a while that when the doorbell rang you didn't go to the door?

LG: That's right.

Ward: Somebody else did?

LG: That's right. But when I started appearing before these committees, we were living on this side of the bay, and I will say that the response of the neighbors was very cordial, very friendly, very supportive.

Ward: That wouldn't have been so true on Ashbury Terrace, I guess.

LG: I'm not sure. Of course, times were also changing. The McCarthy era was beginning to die off, beginning in 1955, even though there were still a lot of overhangs.

Ward: Speaking about the children resenting your absences and the problems created by them, that didn't show itself in their college years, did it?

LG: Oh, no. As a matter of fact, the relationship with the children has been very good; it's a warm family and a very close family and it still stays that way. The kids keep in touch with us all the time. Lee lives in San Rafael and we see her and the grandchildren.

Ward: Those are the only grandchildren you have?

LG: Yes; they are now seven and four, boy and a girl. The little girl is the one who had some trouble, but she seems to be coming out of it. She gets around, is bright, but doesn't seem to have quite the same mobility as the other children when it comes to running and things like that. That will come along with age. But she seems healthy and everything else is all right.

Ward: Lee is the middle daughter, right?

LG: Yes.

Ward: Now, what's Ann? She's a teacher, isn't she?

LG: She's been teaching the last year up at Sonoma State in anthropology; then this last year or so, she has been working on these environmental studies, particularly on Indian sites which are now required before development and things of that sort take place; they try to hang on to the Indian sites rather than have them covered up or bulldozed out. So, she works through Sonoma State on this project. She lives in Occidental; actually in Sebastopol right on the edge of Occidental.

Ward: She was married for a while?

LG: She was married to David King, but that marriage is dissolved. They remain very friendly.

Ward: You still have a good relationship with him and his mother, I believe.

After retirement, any Thursday at 7:30 a.m. on the San Francisco waterfront, meeting with friends. Left to right: Jim Kendall, Joe Paasen, Louis Goldblatt

The Louis Goldblatt family at home in Mill Valley, ca. 1970
Left to right: Terry, Lee, Liza, Louis, and Ann Goldblatt

LG: Yes, as a matter of fact, this month we have had the use of the place she has at Stinson Beach.

Ward: Yes, we've been there a couple of times. Now, Liza?

LG: Lisa is down at UCLA working toward a Ph.D. in musicology and she doesn't have much more to go; I think one more semester. She's the youngest, quite a good musician, a fairly good pianist. She doesn't work as much on that as she does on her theory these days, this field of musicology, which I don't think existed when I was at school.

Ward: Actually I had never heard of it until recently.

LG: No, neither had I.

Ward: People go for it. I know Lou Gottlieb, who was a damn fine musician, went back to school to study musicology.

LG: Lisa's interest is primarily in Tibetan music, although I think she plans to do some field work in it. It'll be damn interesting if she can get into Tibet.

Ward: Well, you ought to be able to grease the way for her.

LG: Maybe, I'll give her a hand - we'll see.

Ward: You ought to go along and see the country and that 16,000 foot plateau.

LG: I'm not sure that type of place is the most comfortable for me to run around in.

Ward: Well, Dianne Feinstein gave up at 15,000, so -

LG: I don't know; how high is the plateau at Tibet?

Ward: About 16,000 -

LG: Oh, it is that high?

Ward: Oh, I remember Terry philosophizing one day that in regard to some marital problems with one of the girls, that she told whichever one of the girls it was that "marriage is a job, you have to work at it."

LG: Well, Terry did.

Ward: Did you?

LG: Yes, but after my own fashion.

Ward: Well, do you want to elaborate?

LG: There's no question that the kind of work I did meant that the amount of time in town was automatically limited; same thing was true as to the amount of time I spent with the family; still the amount of time spent with the family was not all that bad.

Family Doings

LG: I remember when the kids were still growing up at Ashbury Terrace, there was a regular routine in the evening. I always tried to get home for dinner, even if I had a meeting afterward. I might not get home until one or two o'clock, but I tried to get home for dinner. There was always a business of telling stories - some kind of story. As a matter of fact, I began to invent a character called Johnny Escapo.

Ward: Yes, you mentioned that before.

LG: When I was under the weather in the hospital over at Walnut Creek, Lee did a picture story of Johnny Escapo.

We were very close friends of Frances Foster and George Andersen. As a matter of fact, in our move to Ashbury Terrace George Andersen helped us find the house. As I recall, I told Terry to go out and look for a place to live. We were living in a rented place at the time Lee was born and George found this place. They wanted $6,500, and I thought that was too much money. I was making $75 a week and George gave us a hand. One day he came to me and said, "Lou, you just bought the house; it's $6,300, whether you like it or not." He decided he wasn't going to screw around with it anymore.

LG: George and Frances had this place up at Fallen Leaf Lake, at the Stanford tract near Lake Tahoe. Well, Frances worked all the time and George worked like a fool. It was a lucky summer when George took two weeks off in a row. Frances would never take off more than a week and a few weekends. George was anxious that the kids all go up there.

Terry would take our three kids and their four kids and spend the whole summer up there at Fallen Leaf Lake. She had the whole brood. The house was well laid out, and there was enough age dispersion so that some responsibility could be divided up. So, they spent delightful summers there; hiked all over Desolation Valley. I used to get up there weekends.

I remember getting up there one time just before midnight and I had had a rough week and decided I'd like to spend a weekend up there. Terry says, "You're just in time for the moonlight hike," up to the top of Mt. Talac, which apparently took place every year. All the people in the Stanford (University) camp would get together and she said, "Why don't you come along?" And not thinking too much, I said, "Fine, I'll come along."

We started out on this hike and we were at 6500 feet and rapidly going up. The fortunate thing was that there was a chap by the name of Gilmore along on the hike. Pretty soon he pulls out a bottle from his back pocket and says, "I think you'll need one of these too."

Well, we both got up to the top of Mt. Talac all right but really in very shaky shape and by that time it was as cold as a witch's tit, freezing. We gathered all the firewood and we had a fire going within a few minutes. I guess somebody must have thought it was a danger signal when they saw it from the other end of the lake.

Ward: Did the sirens begin to go?

LG: No, not to the top of Mt. Talac. Well, there's just these little tiny trails. I remember taking these wonderful long hikes; we hiked the whole length of Desolation, even taking hikes which started at Fallen Leaf and went over Tamarack,

LG: along the length of Desolation and then passed the Fontenellas and came out at Emerald Bay. George was not enthusiastic about hiking.

Ward: I didn't know you were.

LG: Oh, yes. I used to hike like a mad man. I remember one day we climbed three peaks up there - Pyramid, Agazziz and Dick's. We covered something over twenty miles, mostly on mountain trails. Of course, I could never do that again, no matter what. The summers up there were great. The kids all learned to water ski, and they became good at it too. As a matter of fact, I got so I could water ski and my great feat was finally skiiing the length of Fallen Leaf Lake.

This was a wonderful arrangement and frankly, it was Terry's, you know, because Frances trusted Terry completely with her kids and they liked us and got along fine; as a matter of fact, a little bit too well. I remember Benjy (Andersen) and Lee - both the same age, decided to take rocks and knock out the headlights on my car. They did a very thorough job.

I remember taking one week off up there and finding one of the big tamarack pines that had been cut down by the Fire Service and cut into lengths. I figured that was just the thing for me to do; cut this thing up into firewood. And George had all the equipment up there, sledges and wedges, so I worked on it every morning. I would go down there right after breakfast and work up a terrific sweat.

I must have had at least a couple of good cords of wood, nicely piled up, when the owner of the house came by, and said, "I want to thank you very much. I don't know your name, but that was a very, very considerate thing for you to do." I said, "You mean this is your tree?" She said, "Yes, it's on my property and I had the Forest Service drop it for me." Well, she saw the humor of it at once and said, "Why don't you take half?" That was a fair enough deal, and I packed half of it up to George's place.

LG: But we got to know the people up there and liked them. And this went on many summers and the only time it presented problems was during the war; problems on gas stamps. But somehow we managed. I remember once only having enough gas as far as Sacramento, then getting one of our guys who had nothing but gas stamps to drive me the rest of the way. How to get back was another story. Terry took it all in stride.

Ward: You spoke of the division of labor in your parents' family; the man's job was so and so and the woman's job was so and so. I think that kind of obtained in your own family, didn't it?

LG: It did in the sense of the mother being responsible for the home. It was Terry who invariably did the shopping for everything, and she was frugal. Before we found this place, she must have spent close to five years looking around Mill Valley.

Before we bought the place in San Francisco, I think Terry saw every single house there was around. There were some lovely houses for sale very, very cheap because some of these rich nuts out in Presidio and Pacific Heights took off after Pearl Harbor. One lovely house on the Presidio wall for only $10,000; forget it!

Ward: You were then making $75 a week; what was the average warehouseman making?

LG: At that point he was making $40 - $45 a week.

Ward: So, your salary was pretty good for those days?

LG: It wasn't a question of getting by; we could get by on my salary. It was no problem. The problem in my mind was taking on that kind of a financial obligation, which later turned out to be negligible, really. I had to borrow the down payment, partly from my folks and partly somewhere else.

The monthly FHA (Federal Housing Administration) payments - principal, interest, taxes and insurance, amounted to something like $49 and a few cents a month. I remember getting an increase to $50, because the taxes went up. I thought it was outrageous. (laughter)

Ward: Well, anyhow, after initial experimentation, you and Terry have been married how long, now?

LG: Forty three - forty four years.

Ward: Well, that speaks for itself; you managed to put up with each other and help each other?

LG: Yes, scream at each other and everything else. But on the score of retirement, that's been no problem. If anything, Terry's on my ass more often because she says, "Look, why can't you play golf three times a week, or four times a week? Get out of the house more?"

Ward: Well, she's concerned about the lack of exercise on your part - that I know.

LG: But if you think she's concerned about preparing lunch, forget it.

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Ward: You were saying, Lou, that you and Terry get along pretty well.

LG: Yes, and I do admire her completely. She's built a life for herself and a very complete one, in many ways. She has a circle of friends she sees and she's not nearly as abrasive as I am. I'm arguing with most of my friends half the time, losing some, getting some; it's like a revolving door.

Ward: Is she more subtle than you are?

LG: She's much more politic.

Ward: I'll tell you something a friend of yours says about you: "Louie Goldblatt can be many kinds of a son-of-a-bitch, but there's one thing about him, he's absolutely honest."

LG: Yes, but these days it makes no difference what kind of a son-of-a-bitch you are; you are not supposed to be a son-of-a-bitch. We're living in a different era; we're supposed to be nice. It's the most damnable, unbelievable pejorative adjective I can think of - nice! - and describing somebody as nice!

Ward: You wouldn't call Terry "nice" in that sense?

LG: No, of course not. Terry is different. She's a pleasant, outgoing person. She has her own position; she makes it clear and doesn't back away from it. She is far more interested in what she's doing than what somebody else is thinking. When she came back from the China trip, that's all she'd talk about to her friends; if they don't want to hear about it, she'll talk about it anyway. But she says it in a much better way than I do.

She's busy with things like the Audubon - the various bird groups. She hasn't caught a bird yet, but she is not supposed to. She swims all the time. She went through this hip operation and came through it in amazing shape; she did very well and walks very well.

When we're out at Stinson, she walks the whole length of that beach - from Bolinas point all the way down to the Stinson Beach Park and back again. She's swimming at least three or four times a week. A group of these women contribute a couple of bucks a month to keep some pool heated around here. They take turns leading swimming exercises. She knows better than to ask me to join.

Ward: Why don't you join?

LG: Well, I don't like swimming, for one thing. I'm not worth a good goddam because I never could swim. Oh, I can swim, yes - but it's always out of brute strength, that's all. Not because I don't know how to swim. As a matter of fact, I remember one time as a kid saying I would swim around a pier. I remember trying to swim around a pier at Santa Monica or Venice, about half a mile out, but I finally made it. I went through the water just plowing, plowing. So, I never was a swimmer - just didn't have the knack.

Terry is a very whole person - that's what counts - and the fact that she has her life put together. The family feels that way, and she is very sensitive to things, too. For example, growing girls are not the easiest things in the

LG: world to communicate with; they have their own moods. There are times when they want no company; they want no one around telling them what to do.

Least of all do they want a parent telling them what to do. That's another way of saying, "Okay, little baby, come back in the nest." Well, none of our kids are that way; they left the nest when they should have, with varied success, I'll admit. Ann went to Reed (College). Terry and I are lucky in one way. Terry had an uncle who left some money for each of the kids for an educational fund.

Ward: That helped?

LG: Yes, and Ann hoarded that money, took care of it very well. Went through a couple of years at Reed; then she transferred to Cal with her husband. Lee spent a couple of years in Oberlin and then went to Cal, but things didn't turn out too well for her there. Lisa sort of manages somehow in her own way, not too easily. They all have that same degree of independence.

Ward: Liza is the one you don't see too much of?

LG: No, because she is at UCLA. She was here Thanksgiving with her boyfriend; they'll be up again at Christmas time.

Ward: Liza is a nickname for Elizabeth, isn't it?

LG: Yes. Anyhow, Terry put things together. Maybe you're right; it's a relationship not too different than that between my father and my mother, although there was a difference because my father was a complete home body; when he finished work he headed home; when he got home, dinner was on the table. Until father ate, you didn't raise any tough subjects.

Ward: Well, I got that feeling that there was a very distinct division of labor.

LG: Terry puts it very simply. She says when it comes to making sure that the dinner is ready and that there's food in the house, a place to live and that it's clean and the laundry is done,

LG: "I'll take care of all those small problems; when it comes to the big world problems, those are yours. If you want to discuss questions like China, Soviet relations, if you want to discuss the whole question of SALT, that's the man's problem."

Ward: Although, you just said a few minutes ago, when she wants to discuss China with her friends, she's going to discuss it.

LG: That's a personal thing. In some ways, I've been able to compensate, but not completely. Luckily, I managed to take Terry with me on a number of occasions. In 1948, when I went down for the first meeting of the CTAL in Mexico, I took Terry along. That was a great trip that included going over the Valley of Mexico and down to Tampico, also picking up a case of amoebic dysentery on the way.

Several times she came down to Hawaii when I was stuck down there for a long time. She was down there in 1951 when Jack Hall was arrested. That was a long stretch of negotiations and I decided to bring the whole family down, spent the summer there.

So, we moved around. She has gone to places like Canada with me. We went to Hungary and Bulgaria. Then we had several trips to Ecuador, one on a banana boat. We went to the Galapagos, a fantastic trip; a trip to Japan. So, I tried to make up for a few of these things. Also, she's a very good traveler.

Ward: You said that if the invitation to China came through, she could be ready in two hours.

LG: You can cut that down an hour and a half.

Ward: Well, you must have spent hours and hours telling Terry what went on in your life aside from the trips you had taken - she seems to be quite <u>au courant</u> as to your activities.

LG: She's very knowledgeable.

Ward: And your problems.

LG: Oh yes, when I got back from one of these long roundy-go-roundies I had going in Hawaii, I'd always fill her in with the details, because she knew a lot of the people, like Jack Hall and Yoshiko. They became very close friends.

She loves to swim and Jack loves to swim and there was a channel that used to go all the way out to the Ala Moana Harbor, I guess about a half a mile. She would haul Jack out of bed in the morning - just wake him up. Half the time the poor bastard didn't want to go out and swim. He'd been up late too. She'd get him up and they would go out there, swimming the whole channel and back again.

Ward: The upshot of it is that you have a good marriage.

LG: Yes, really.

Ruminations

Ward: Well, that's fine. Now, we get to the point of your retirement. Here you are, a man not yet finished by any means. Slowed down a little - the heart surgery, and so forth. Good head and many things to contribute. What gives?

LG: Well, I figured I would take a sabbatical. The only reason I didn't take a complete sabbatical was because of you.

Ward: Oh, I got in the way?

LG: Yes, you decided this (oral history) would be a good idea. Terry thought it was a good idea.

Ward: What would you have done otherwise?

LG: Do a lot of things I'm doing now, whenever I can; read, which I enjoy. As a matter of fact, I'm re-reading things I used to quote all the time. I've been reading a good deal about what's happened within the Communist party and the Communist movement; everything from Al Richmond's book to Santiago Carrillo on Euro-Communism.

LG: Reading almost everything I have been able to get my hands on about China. I felt very keenly about China. As a matter of fact, so keenly that that night after Carter's announcement that we were recognizing China, I called Jimmy Herman* and said, "Jimmy, did you hear the news?"

He said, "Yeah," and I said that we ought to send a wire off at once, and frankly I felt that the union ought to go "boots and saddles" - start wheeling out our whole record, going all the way back to the refusal to handle scrap iron, our demands for the recognition of China, our condemnation of Chiang Kai Chek, our insistence that the Chinese be admitted to the United Nations, the demands for China trade.

It's a long, long record which repeats itself at every convention, Executive Board meeting,. and what have you. I figured what a time to go full blast! Let's start off with a telegram to China, and I said, "By the way, you should add my name." All I got was a gulp in response. So, I sat down and composed a telegram and sent it off myself.

Ward: Do you want to read the telegram on tape here?

LG: Oh, sure. Yes. I sent it to the All-China Federation of Trade Unions: "Announcement normalization relations U.S. and Peoples' Republic enormous benefit future mankind. Congratulations, friendship, solidarity.

Louis Goldblatt
Secretary-Treasurer Emeritus
ILWU"

Ward: Was it Barry Goldwater or Chiang's son who said breaking off with Taiwan was the biggest sin mankind ever perpetrated?

LG: Yes, and of course that comes from one of the most reliable sources that anybody could ever dream up, considering the product there; between Chiang Kai Chek and Madame Chiang, I guess that was a fairly literate statement.

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*Successor to ILWU president Bridges

Ward: I do think it proved one thing, that foreign policy is much easier than domestic. Here you have to deal with the voters.

LG: No, here's where you're at the point of production. Here's where everything gets tied to the dollar.

Ward: Let's go on with what you plan to do with your remaining time.

LG: I'm not sure. I think I said at that dinner you were talking about that I had three objectives, to get my blood pressure down, get my weight down, get my golf score down. Well, the first two have been fairly well accomplished; my weight's down, my blood pressure is down. The golf score is much more difficult. Every once in a while I go out. Golf is in your head, you know. There is a marvelous book on the subject, "Golf and The Kingdom."

Ward: How often do you break a hundred?

LG: Oh, I'd say now . . . .

Ward: Have you ever broken a hundred?

LG: Yes; the best score I ever shot was an 88 on a regulation, full length golf course.

Ward: That's pretty good, then.

LG: Yes, that's very good. If I played that all the time, I'd be a very happy man. Right now, I'd say I break a hundred once out of three times. That's about it; but other days I'm like a basket case. Unless you're thinking golf and nothing else, somehow it doesn't quite click.

I have other things to do - whether I teach something, teach some classes, I'm not sure myself. They asked for a vita, a summarized biography, over at San Francisco State and I sent one over there. I don't want to teach a regular class - I'm not fond of lecturing; maybe once in a while on specific subjects. I first want to take a look-see at whom I'm talking to. A group came over here for class the other night; they wanted me to teach a class at State.

Ward: Is that one of Jack Olsen's (an instructor in labor history) things?

LG: No. I have taught at Jack Olsen's. I said to this group, "I'd be glad to talk to the class, but I don't see any reason why I should go over there; why doesn't the class come over here?" I thought it would be a little more pleasant than sitting around in one of these classrooms. So they did.

We had a very pleasant evening, sort of bounced all over the place because they themselves are not too sure what they want. The outstanding characteristic of most of the people who attend these classes, most of the people who are active or semi-active in the trade union movement, is one of terrible floundering. It's understandable because the Left . . . .

Ward: The Left is floundering . . . .

LG: The Left is fragmented, and so badly that they just don't have any compass to go by. The net result is all bad. It was like the session I took in down at Cesar Chavez' place near Bakersfield, La Paz.

I went down there a couple of weeks ago and spent the day teaching a class on collective bargaining. Here's these people sitting around thinking that collective bargaining had something to do with the way you pull rabbits out of a hat; little tricks and gimmicks. I tried to say it as gently as possible; those are not the answers.

Ward: You said it depends on the knowledge of the activity or the production, whatever it is of the other side . . . .

LG: The opposition, sure; together with the most important thing, how much power can you pull together - how can -

Ward: Did you ever talk about the business of knowing that the employer has his people in your ranks and you have people in his ranks?

LG: I don't think it would be worth a shit.

Ward: Sometimes -

LG: Oh, it can be worth something in the most miniscule way. For example, an employer says okay, my maximum offer is going to be 25 cents an hour, and you have somebody in the employer's ranks who could tell you that this guy is just putting on a show and if you push hard enough you can get it up to 35 cents. Yes, I can see that that could be of some value. But it's not the way collective bargaining works.

So, whether I do some teaching, whether I do a series of pieces, I don't know. David Ames is a good friend of mine; he's an anthropologist at State; and he feels that there ought to be a series of questions and answers on the sociological problems in this country.

Ward: That sounds interesting.

LG: Yes, and he wants to do a series of interviews, things on which I would have to prepare a lot of notes.

Ward: Constructive thinking?

LG: That's right; and he thought that there ought to be a whole series, and he is very shrewd on one point: he realizes that 99 percent of whatever value can be put together out of something of this sort is not in the answers as much as in the questions.

Ward: That's something a friend who has a progressive television program says, "The people I am trying to reach are young people who say, 'Well, okay, this is history, but what has it to do with us?'" That's the point we're reaching in this thing now.

LG: Yes, I think he's right about that; the nub is in the questioning; if the right questions are asked, then the results will be there.

Ward: That sounds good.

LG: Some things I don't want to do - people have talked to me about going into consulting, and I don't like that.

Ward: If you could help the union once in a while, or in a situation . . . .

LG: If I could help the union, or a union - fine. I can't see the union calling on me right now. I think they are in too delicate a situation. I mean, here they are a newly elected group of officers and the first and most important thing they have to do is earn their own spurs.

Ward: Establish confidence from the membership and get confidence in themselves. And you would undermine that, if you took over?

LG: If they have to go run to Daddy, nothing is gained. In the struggle with the problems, I hope they will do more than just struggle. I hope that their response to things that develop will be more than the usual run-of-the-mill union contract affairs.

I think, for example, it would be very important that the union go "huckedly-buck" on something like China, if for no other reason than to revive all the things the union did regarding China. I think that tradition is important - not just in the sense of "Fiddler on the Roof" - in the form of continuity of learning among our own membership, a continuity of feeling.

You may start off being the one dissenting voice, but eventually history catches up with your idea. I say being prematurely right on things is terribly important.

Ward: Sometimes very painful, too.

LG: It can be painful, but it's one of the few painful things that are worth it.

Ward: The pain, in the end, feels good.

LG: That's right, yes. I think it's worthwhile and ought not to be missed. I think it's worth while reviving just so that you can do it again. It's not like proving that you can sit in a bed of nails.

Ward: Well, the ILWU is moving into a strange, new world where you have inflation, unemployment, recession, all hand in glove, which the economists can't figure out.

LG: Oh, the economists can figure it out.

Ward: Well, but they differ. Sure, you can get an economist who will figure it any way you want.

LG: Look, it doesn't take any brilliance for an economist to figure out what the rate of inflation is; both the true rate and the one they put down. It does not take any brilliance for an economist to tell you what the unemployment rate is; the true rate or the one they put down. That doesn't take any brilliance on the part of the economist.

When they start spinning their theories as to how you handle such problems within the capitalist structure, where the one thing that is actually inflexible is capitalism, these economists don't just differ; they run for cover!

Ward: The international conglomerate . . . .

LG: Yes, it is a new economy. For example, how many Americans know that the general standard of living, using accepted measurements, is now higher for the average worker in some countries than it is here in the United States? This is finally coming to the attention of some people. I think it is partially true in some of the Scandinavian countries, and it is probably true without question in Germany.

Here's something that requires a completely new re-evaluation. Is it because these foreigners don't believe in this enormous conspicuous consumption of wealth, which is really the characteristic, right now, of the U. S. economy? Look at the New Yorker (magazine) - a $100,000 fur coat, $120,000 Rolls Royces! This kind of conspicuous consumption!

It could be that these other countries are not that far away from the work ethic as we have gotten. Even the employer in those countries

LG: does not see syphoning that much off for himself; at least he piles some of it back in toward the building of the country and its industrial development. I am just spinning off a part of a theory that would take a great deal of elaboration.

These are subjects that require at least brand new opening up. It's not enough to talk about the unemployment rate here or the inflation rate here, or what the economists have to say. All you're doing there is just get tied up in endless ribbons of toilet paper, with the shit included. That's all that will happen. It's going to take a lot more than that. Certain fundamental things have gone wrong with the whole structure.

Hope For The World

Ward: What about war?

LG: I personally feel that war is quite unlikely, notwithstanding all the posturing, this endless build-up. I know the axiomatic thing that if you keep building arms, eventually you will use arms. I'd say even if all that is true, Churchill - whether he's with or without a bottle of brandy and a dozen cigars - was really quite accurate when he talked about the balance of terror.

Ward: In other words, are you saying that these fiddlings around, these testings of weapons in Spain, Cambodia, Vietnam, with the major nations behind them in Angola, South Africa, Rhodesia . .?

LG: Oh, that will go on and on.

Ward: You're saying these events will not bear fruit in general war? Is that what you think?

LG: Yes, that's what I think. I don't see any of them becoming trigger points of an international war. You're going to see all kinds of proxy wars, small wars; all kinds of colonial freedom movements

LG: which the imperialists can't stop. I don't know how long the guerilla warfare will go on in parts of Africa, possibly another twenty years, until literally the attritional rate is such that the white man - like in Rhodesia - finds out he can't make it.

The most important thing going on in Rhodesia - not the newspaper accounts; those are the usual headline stuff - is the out-migration of whites. Only once in a while do you see those figures. So that these things I think will go on for awhile, but I don't see the elements that lead to war.

Ward: You realize that you are denying the cycle that has been going on for the last two or three thousand years, at least?

LG: I know that, I know that.

Ward: You think that there is a great change then, the balance of terror . . . .?

LG: The great change is the balance of terror; the most unbelievable thing is the atomic bomb. It is the devil's change, so maybe this will be the devil's era. It wasn't a long time ago that everyone said God was on our side. I think now everybody is saying the devil is on our side.

Ward: Well, the question comes, how are the good guys going to convince the bad guys, or vice versa, without a war?

LG: That's another situation.

Ward: Well, say, socialism vs. capitalism?

LG: I don't see the thing as a world armed confrontation. It will be a world economic confrontation or a world economic competition, in the case of many capitalist countries. They will go into all kinds of varied movements that range all the way from state socialism, to the welfare state, to what have you. In other words, you are going to see a different kind of re-distribution of wealth, other than by just direct take-over.

LG: On that score, for example, it could be that the Euro-Communists are the only ones who have the accurate estimate of what can be done in Europe. Now, I'm not saying that could win. I think of a young Italian who was over at Mark and Elizabeth Eudey's (friends) house and in his own very uncomfortable way - because he didn't like some of the questions - finally gave perhaps the most accurate appraisal of Euro-Communism. He said, "I don't know any choice but that program, but I don't think it will work."

I think it's a business of being an eclectic; people have to have a good ideological base and a good idea as to where they are going; not so rigid as to be impossible or inflexible. At the same time I think measuring the conditions in the different countries, depending on their own stage of development, becomes more and more important.

Ward: You seem to be finding common ground with some right-wingers who say that we, particularly in this country and in some other parts of the so-called Western world, are now undergoing what they call "creeping socialism". That's an over-simplification, I know.

LG: That's like the AMA (American Medical Association) yelling that Medicare is . . . .

Ward: No - no.

LG: Or that national health insurance is . . . .

Ward: There are times when the Left and the Right do agree, momentarily.

LG: Yes, but I don't think it's creeping socialism. Sure, you're going to find changes in the role of the state, particularly with our present economy. But that is not socialism, which is a basic change in both ownership and power. Socialism is fundamentally the ownership of the means of production by the people.

Ward: And gradualism vs. revolution?

LG: No - not necessarily; what might be gradualism in Scandanavia might be revolution in a place

LG: like Rhodesia. Some places, for example, the democratic propensity or the possibility for change are real, a course which should be taken full advantage of. In other places they are just not there; they are non-existent; there is no way to talk, except with a rifle.

You cannot compare the situation in Rhodesia with the situation in Norway. People start jumbling these things together, and I think it's only for the purposes of rhetoric.

Ward: Well, it seems to me you look forward to the next few years as a lively time.

LG: I think it is going to be a damn lively time, and I feel good about it all. I'm not disturbed by the fact that there are differences of opinion in the socialist camp. I'm disturbed for example when you have factionalism and fragmentation of the Left, so there is no Left; they spend all their time pissing in each other's shoes. They never even get a chance to get off the ground, for whatever value that might be; that's pretty sad.

The fact that different countries go their different ways, generally I consider to be good; whether it be Roumania going in a certain direction, whether it be Yugoslavia going in a certain direction, China going in a certain way, or Poland. They are beginning to change and vary.

The fact that you find something springing up such as Euro-Communism might be as this young man said, "It's the only thing we can do and I don't think it will work." All right, if it won't work, they will find something else that will work.

I find all these things very promising; nothing to feel terribly discouraged about. I don't see any purpose in sitting around weeping big tears; bringing out the crying towels and saying, "God, if only the Soviet Union and China would get together and consolidate and pull all their strength together, look at the difference in the

LG: balance of power." That, I think, is a load of bunk. They are saying that if these two countries would get together they would have sufficient power to tell the rest of the world what to do. The one thing they are not going to be able to do is to tell other people what they are to do!

Ward: Very good point. Well, do you want to call it off here?

LG: I think so.

Transcriber and Final Typist: Angela Ward

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(Editor's Note: The following discussion of a group trip to Israel was taped out of context as an afterthought to the main interview, but is inserted here to preserve chronological continuity as much as possible. The following dialogue therefore will be heard on the last half of Tape 42, side B, and the first half of Tape 43, side A. The balance of Tape 40, side B is resumed in proper sequence at the conclusion of the account of Goldblatt's Israeli trip.)

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Estolv Ethan Ward

Born 1899 in Los Angeles; father a Socialist lawyer out of Rhode Island; mother an ardent feminist, daughter of a San Francisco Quaker merchant, and possessor of a Ph. D. from Swarthmore and an M. D. from Boston Medical School. The infant was removed to San Francisco at age two weeks, and with lacunae has lived in the Bay Region, mostly Berkeley, ever since.

Three and a half years of institutionalized instruction; otherwise his education came through tutors, travel, and daily family discussions.

Became campus reporter at U. C. Berkeley for the Oakland Tribune, proceeding to top rewrite, general assignment, and assistant city editor. Covered the San Francisco general strike in 1934 and in those three days learned things that changed his life. Became a founder of the local chapter of the Newspaper Guild and was fired and blacklisted by his publisher, Joseph R. Knowland. Became bailiff and court reporter for the California Supreme Court, meanwhile being active on his leisure time in the burgeoning CIO labor movement. Resigned his court job to become founding executive secretary of the Alameda County CIO Council.

In the next 11 years, he became successively first vice-president, California State CIO Council; CIO legislative representative, Sacramento, 1939; executive secretary, Harry Bridges Defense Committee, Angel Island trial, 1939; executive vice-president, California Labor's Non-Partisan League, 1940; radio writer, Los Angeles CIO news, 1940-41; organizer, Mine Mill and Smelter Workers' Union, in Los Angeles and Southern Nevada, 1942-44; San Francisco CIO radio writer, 1944; CIO-PAC director, San Francisco CIO Council, 1945-48. Following that, odd jobs and labor journalism.

Author, Harry Bridges On Trial, Modern Age, 1940; a labor novel published only in Polish translation, Renegat, 1953. Numerous labor and travel articles.

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